

-

The' Brahmō Samaj.

KESHUB CHUNDER SEN'S

ESSAYS :

THEOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL.

FIFTH EDITION

CALCUTTA :

BRAHMO TRACT SOCIETY,
78, UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD.

1916.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY R. S. BHATTA,
AT THE BIDHAN PRESS,
78, UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD,

P R E F A C E .

THE Minister's writings originally published in two separate Parts as "Essays : Theological and Ethical Part I and Part II" are here all reprinted and published in one volume. The Essays are arranged in chronological order with the exception of a few (from page 150 to page 202) whose dates could not be found. Two new Essays (1) Harmony of Faith, page 237, (2) Divine Presence, page 239 have been added. The date on page 71 of this volume should be *February*, 1861 instead of January 1861.

The compiler trusts that this Fifth Edition will awaken the interest of the public and inspire some of our workers to undertake to collect and publish the rest of the Minister's writings contained in the old volumes of the "*Indian Mirror*."

LILY COTTAGE,
78, UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD, }
The 15th September, 1916.

[FIRST EDITION.]

THESE Essays were contributed to the "Indian Mirror," and are now reprinted in a collected form. It will be seen that no method has been attempted in their arrangement ; but it has been deemed proper to publish them almost in the order in which they originally appeared. Had time or circumstances permitted, it would have been possible to bring together more essays within the compass of this volume. But this is rendered unnecessary by the fact that the present work is only the first of a series which it is proposed to bring out from time to time. Some apology is due for the inevitable imperfections of the essays, which were intended for the columns of a newspaper, and were therefore evidently written in great haste. The compiler trusts, however, they will not prove uninteresting to the public, as revealing the spiritual experiences of an Indian Theist.

January 1874.

[SECOND EDITION.]

THE present series will contain all those essays and writings of Keshub Chunder Sen which either originally appeared in the newspapers or having been published in pamphlet forms, are now out of print. The first volume embraces the "Essays : Theological and Ethical" which was first published in 1874. The next part will, it is hoped, contain the Minister's articles on social and religious subjects contributed to the journals of his church and the popular tracts published in 1861. The compiler believes it will be possible within a short period to place all the writings and utterances of the Minister within the reach of the public.

CONTENTS.

	<i>Page.</i>
Young Bengal this is for You	1
Be Prayerful	9
Religion of Love	21
Basis of Brahmoism	30
Brethren, Love Your Father	43
Signs of the Times	52
An Exhortation	65
Testimonies to the Validity of Intuitions	71
Testimonies to the Validity of Intuitions	80
The Rev. S. Dyson's Questions on Brahmoism Answered	89
Questions and Answers	98
Revelation	103
Atonement and Salvation	121
An Appeal to Young India	136
Harmonious Development	150
Martha and Mary	153
True Prayer	157
Man as a Teacher	159
Divine Mercy and Holiness	161
The Prophet of Nuddea	163
Repentance and Joy	166
The Law of Forgiveness	168
Our Resting Place	172
Beware of Trials	175
The Spirit of Christ	178
Subjective and Objective	180
The Love of Man	182
The Apostolical Missionary	187
Immobility	191
Direct and Indirect Teaching	192
Woman's Position in Society	195
Asceticism	198
Equality of the Sexes	201
The Study of Science	203

	<i>Page,</i>
Religion and Morality	208
Flowers	210
God's Grace and Man's Efforts... ..	212
Resolution	215
Contradicting God's Words	217
It, He and Thou	218
A Few Minutes with Nature	220
The Architect and His Workmen	224
Origin of Sin	227
Natural Depravity	229
Religious Enthusiasm	230
Contemplation of the Invisible Spirit	233
Harmony of Faith and Grace	237
Divine Presence	239
The Golden Rule	240
Passionate Love of God and Humanity	243
Power of Faith	246
Renewal of Marriage	249
The Inner World	251
Crucifixion	253
They went to the Mountain	256
Past Sins	259
How God Punishes Believers	261
Brief Ejaculation	264
A Thin Partition	266
Prayer for Physical Benefits	268
Mysticism	270
Blessed are They that Serve	273
Perception and Reflection	276

YOUNG BENGAL.

THIS IS FOR YOU.

No. 1.]

[June, 1860.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am extremely happy to learn that you have recently abandoned those sceptical notions which you hitherto so obstinately cherished, and which rendered you an object of pity to many of your friends. Allow me to congratulate you, with all my heart, on this important and blessed change in your mind. Oh ! how shocking, cheerless, and pitiable, my friend, was your former life ! Intoxicated with your high intellectual attainments you used to speak scoffingly of morality, religion and God, and conduct yourself with an amount of atheistic pride and recklessness awful to conceive. Morality you laughed at as nothing more than self-interest : religion you regarded as a phantom conjured up by crafty priests to terrify and gull people in order to satisfy their own lust of lucre ; and the doctrine of a future state you disposed of as a fine fancy—an idiot's dream ; and even the Holy God you tried to depose from His supremacy, and defile His name with unholy and abominable sarcasms. The liberal education you received, instead of ennobling and exalting your mind, degraded and brutalized it. True, it led you to forsake idolatry—the worship of stocks and stones : true, it delivered you from the galling yoke of Brahminical priesthood, and the thousand and one injurious institutions which have, for centuries, smothered and paralyzed all the nobler sentiments and energies of the people. and clogged

their progress. But alas ! what did it give you instead of them ! A spurious liberalism, mischievous and hateful in the extreme. You started from disbelief in idolatry and superstition ; but you landed in unbelief and scepticism. You doubted Hinduism ; but you brought yourself to doubt religion altogether. In flinging away the shackles of corrupt doctrines and institutions, you scattered to the winds the holy bonds of morality. Often were you heard to say :—“ Let the illiterate and credulous deal with religion and immortality, prayer and atonement, faith and salvation ; let them devote their minds to such visionary pursuits—I feel it degrading to my high scholarship and liberal views to countenance them. Was it to befool myself with the fantastic fancies of theologians that I so long applied my untiring energies to intellectual pursuits ? Was it for this that I consumed the midnight oil, and incessantly pored over the deep problems of science and arts ? Better far that I should, as a rational being, cultivate my intellect, and with head and heart, promote my worldly interests, than in the pursuit of airy nothing waste my energies in vain, and in feeding the humours of capricious priests and preachers sacrifice some of my dearest enjoyments, some of my brightest prospects ! Oh for the day when men will think and feel better, and be convinced of the hollowness of religion and morality ! ” Dear brother, whenever I used to reflect on this your former condition, my heart was weighed down with sorrow, and said, man ! son of God ! canst thou degrade thyself so far, and feel so unworthy ? Oh ! shameful effects of education ! Is this the destiny of education,—to foster scepticism, and atheism, and instead of harmoniously developing all the powers and sentiments of the soul, and leading them to God, destroy the best and noblest of them, and teach man to wield the weapons of revolt against

the All-Holy, his Father and Master? If so, then perish such education from the face of the earth, and let simple untutored man enjoy bliss supreme in the company of his Father.

- But—blessed be God—your heart has undergone a change for the better. You have left the gloomy and frightful den of ungodliness and scepticism—which was detrimental to your best interests and derogatory to your honour : you have begun to seek a better and worthier region, where, if you perseveringly advance, you will be led through increasing bliss, unto unfading glory and blessedness everlasting. Oh ! my brother, my heart is filled with raptures unspeakable for this happy transition in your mind—this glorious dawning of religion in your soul. May the thousands of our intelligent countrymen who, vitiated by a false enlightenment, are suffering from the deadly evils of scepticism be, like yourself, ere long delivered from them !

It is impossible, my friend, to calculate the amount of mischief which has been wrought in our country by godless education. Not only has it shed its baneful influence upon the individual, but it has proved an effective engine in counteracting, to no small extent, the social advancement of the people, and in rendering more frightful the intellectual, domestic and moral destitution of the millions of our countrymen. Let any one closely watch the proceedings of the youthful and intelligent community of our country, and he will say—Verily to this source, to the influences of ungodly education, is to be attributed the want of due progress in the social condition of the country. Witness the numerous Improvement Societies, Friendly, Meetings, Debating Clubs, Literary Associations, &c., whose number is hourly increasing. These are composed of young and intelligent men, or “Young Bengal,” as they are generally styled, who apply

themselves to the discussion of important questions of social interest, with all youthful ardour and vehemence, and in the course of discussion display remarkable erudition and learning. Somewhere you see a batch of educated young men, full of spirit and earnestness, concocting schemes how Female Education may be carried on, how the abominable system of Caste may be abolished, how the rays of knowledge may be made to penetrate the veil of ignorance which shrouds the millions of the masses. Somewhere you hear two or three who generally pass for "the flower of Bengal" making eloquent speeches on "What Bengal ought to be," and bestirring a whole audience to marvellous excitement. Somewhere you witness whole bodies of young men unanimously pledging themselves with all solemnity to momentous resolutions like these :—we shall enlighten the masses—elevate the condition of the females—encourage brotherly feeling. Such are the great topics which our young and intelligent countrymen are ever and anon discussing with all enthusiasm and fervour, and preaching with missionary zeal. But what is the upshot of all this ? " Mere prattle without practice." An elaborate essay, an eloquent speech, a warm discussion is all in all. Many and varied indeed are the schemes proposed for the country's good ; but hardly do they pass beyond the pales of theory. Social reforms are speculated upon, but not practically undertaken. Already the conviction has taken a firm root in many minds, that the Bengalees are more talkers than doers. Already those whom the experience of thirty years has taught any lesson have begun to lose all confidence in our high sounding exhortations, burning speeches, and declamatory tracts and pamphlets, and have learnt to draw a clear line of demarcation between lip-patriotism and the country's actual good. Already some have begun to enquire

why do our intelligent and promising youths keep themselves away from practical undertakings—why are they more talkers than doers. This is no knotty problem—no inexplicable anomaly. What, if there is a splendid array of bright intellects? What, if there are so many societies and clubs of intelligent men, assiduously engaged in the discussion of important questions of social reforms? True, there are acute understandings and powerful intellects; true, there are high flights of imagination, and brilliant rhetorical attainments; true, there are minds stored with science and arts :—but where is the heart to work? He who yesterday protested publicly, with all might, against the bestiality of drunkenness and exposed its brutalizing effects, is seen to-day lying in supine prostration at the feet of Bacchus—a pale emaciated slave of intemperance. He who eloquently advocates the cause of female education, and ever and anon exhorts the public to emancipate the native females, does not himself make any attempt to educate and emancipate his own wife and sisters and daughters. He who writes argumentatively and floridly on the vast importance and benefits of travel, would studiously avoid all attempts to “cross the Sindhu”—nay, would wrathfully thunder forth rebukes and scoldings, and inflict severe penalties, if possible, on any of his friends or relations who would venture to go to a foreign country, and thus carry out practically a work whose paramount importance he himself admits. He who protests violently against the system of caste, and exhorts his countrymen to abolish it forthwith, prudentially guards himself, that he may not, in any practical concern, break through its sacred bonds.

Evidently, my friend, there is not the heart to work. Alas! the moral nature is asleep: the sense of duty is dead. There is lack of moral courage—

want of an active religious principle in our pseudo-patriots. Else why is it that while there is, on the one hand, so much of intelligence and intellectual progress, there is, on the other, so little of practical work for the social advancement of the country? Verily, there is a line of demarcation between a mind trained to knowledge and a heart trained to faith, piety, and moral courage. Rest assured my friend, that if in our country intellectual progress went hand in hand with religious development, if our educated countrymen had initiated themselves in the living truths of religion, patriotism would not have been a mere matter of oration and essay, but a reality in practice ; and native society would have grown in health and prosperity. Drunkenness and all other fashionable vices would have been effectually extirpated from this land. Mutual jealousies and enmity, so fearfully prevalent here, would have gradually faded away. That unity and nationality which is considered a great desideratum would have been established ; and our countrymen, consolidated by religious love, would have realized all the benefits of united exertions and mutual sympathies, and effectually surmounted many of those difficulties in the way of social reforms which are now considered insuperable. Stimulated by faith, Young Bengal would have exchanged the easy luxurious bed of speculation for the arena of arduous action, and the visionary schemes of alnascharism for actual enterprizes. Inspired with unconquerable enthusiasm by the Almighty, they would have, with mind and soul, intellect as well as will, manfully endeavoured to promote their own best interests and those of their country.

May that day draw near, my brother, when your goodly example will be followed by others of our educated countrymen ; when repenting for their sceptical recklessness, and prayerfully resigning

themselves to the guidance of the Holy God they shall be regenerated in faith ; when instead of making knowledge an accursed guide to the regions of killing scepticism and worldliness, they shall use it as the bright polestar in the sea of life, and steer the vessel of their soul unto godliness. May wisdom and faith reign in this country in blessed union ?

Go on, my dear brother, go on in the hallowed course which you have begun. Muster up your solemn resolves, and advance steadily, turning neither to the right nor to the left. Difficulties will meet you in the way, temptations will entice you ; but be not alarmed by the one, nor captivated by the other. Oftentimes the corrupt propensities of the mind will perchance rebel against the dictates of conscience, and threaten to arrest the growth of your soul. Oftentimes the frowns of your guardians, the derision and raileries of your neighbours, or the blandishments of your gay associates may slacken the fervour of your devotedness to God. Now and then those awful sceptical prejudices which you have destroyed may haunt you, and attempt to revive your former attachment to them. The black clouds of doubt may darken the glorious morning of your religious life. In short, various circumstances may beset you, and seek to threaten or tempt you back into your by-gone life of scepticism and worldliness. Beware, therefore, my dear brother, beware. Conduct yourself with wariness and constancy, strength and enthusiasm, but above all with thorough resignation to the Divine will. Steadily and prayerfully look up to him—our Light and our Strength, our Father and our Friend. He will fill your mind with saving knowledge, your heart with the sweets of love, your soul with purity and your hands with strength and courage. Retain Him, my brother, in the depths of your heart, and affectionately cling to Him all the days you live. He will make

you “ a defenced city, a column of steel, and walls of brass.” May the incipient glimmerings of faith in your soul gradually become brighter and brighter, and may the God of Love lead you into the everlasting and blessed mansions of purity and bliss !

Believe me,

Your Sincere and Affectionate Friend in Faith,

*

*

*

*

BE PRAYERFUL.

PRAYER : ITS SPONTANEITY, NECESSITY AND
UTILITY.

No 2]

[July, 1860.

I.—I have read, with great pleasure, your truly affectionate letter, and am heartily grateful to you for the wholesome advices and kind encouragements you have given me therein. I regret, however, that I do not wholly deserve the commendation which your friendly feelings have naturally led you to bestow upon me, for though I have alienated my mind from scepticism, and am convinced of the necessity and importance of religion, I have not as yet been able to establish my soul firmly on the rock of faith. There are many things I have yet to learn, many doubts yet to dispel, ere I can fully entitle myself to be called religious. However, there is one point in the sequel of your letter, which seems to rest on a grave error, and which has led me to call on you personally that I may have it properly discussed,—I mean your advice to me to become prayerful. To speak plainly, I look upon prayer as an unwarrantable extreme of dogmatic theology. I count it one of those bold flights of religion in which it surmounts the limits of reason, and soars into the regions of transcendental mysticism—of baseless reveries and extravagant fancies. I have often thought about it, but have found nothing to shake my firm belief that it is thoroughly contradictory to logic, and irreconcilable with

philosophy. Don't think, however, that I mean to depreciate the importance of religion.

B.—You are welcome, my friend, most cordially welcome. I shall, with the utmost pleasure, do all that lies in my power to help you in your religious endeavours and aspirations. Nothing affords me, my dear friend, so much joy as to aid those who sincerely and humbly seek God,—and I would give worlds for such a blessed work. I am happy, that you have, at the very outset, hit upon this pre-eminently important subject, for prayer forms the very gateway of faith. Now, tell me distinctly, what is it that troubles you on this subject.

I.—Why, the very reasonableness of prayer I dispute. My impression is, that it is altogether untenable on philosophical grounds, and, besides, not at all necessary, for certainly, a man may be religious and yet not prayerful. I have made it a point to remain aloof from prayer till I am logically convinced of its propriety.

B.—Logically convinced of its propriety ! What curious notion of prayer ! Yet no wonder that you should entertain it, for agreeably to your habits of thinking you must needs pass every subject through the ordeal of demonstration. There are those who would apply geometric principles to every subject they come in contact with, and would handle every ethical and theological question as a *Q. E. D.* What fatal errors do they eventually land in !—

I.—Do you mean to say, one should scatter all his philosophy and logic to the winds, and run headlong into devotions and prayers ? Really such remarks would serve to deter me from my religious pursuits, for how can I reasonably advance in religious inquiries, if I am called upon to lay down my understanding altogether, and believe whimsical doctrines, which cannot bear the test of argumentation ?

B.—You ought to argue, discuss, and, if possible, demonstrate. These processes I do not disparage, I do not condemn. Understanding and judgment, those valuable gifts of Providence, should not surely be suffered to “fust in us unused.” Man ought to philosophise ; it is his honour to do so. But reasoning should confine itself within its legitimate boundaries : it should not make encroachments upon regions not its own.

I.—This sort of argument by which you ingeniously seek to exclude prayer from the province of reasoning is wholly exceptionable. It shows you are avoiding the real difficulty.

B.—Is prayer a fact of our reflective consciousness ? Do you think that men are led into it by arguments and reasonings, that it is the result of logical processes ?

I.—It ought to be so. Whatsoever a reasonable man does, should be the issue of deliberate thought and valid reasonings. I don't care if the illiterate and credulous pray without reasoning.

B.—Well, tell me however, what prayer is.

I.—It is merely a petition for the removal of a want. In its theological acceptation, it means, I think, a petition to God for the removal of spiritual wants.

B.—Precisely so. Now closely reflect on this definition, and say—does a man pray because he has convinced himself by elaborate syllogistic arguments of the philosophical propriety of doing so ? What an unnatural process !

I.—Why unnatural ? You seem to have made it a point to decry reasoning altogether.

B.—Patiently consider what I say. The tender innocent child lifts its tearful eyes towards its mother, and in semi-articulate language cries—“Mamma ! milk.” The benighted beggar writhing grievously under the inclemencies of the weather knocks at the

door of the first house he meets, and ardently exclaims—"Generous and noble soul, have mercy on me; help me, O help me." The patient suffering from the torments of some acute disease looks up to the doctor, and earnestly prays—"Doctor, save me—save me doctor—I can bear no longer." Now tell me what is it that leads to prayer in such cases? Does logic impel the child, the beggar, and the patient to ask for relief? Is it the conclusions of reasoning that dictate them to do so? Far from it. Common sense assures us, it is the violent feeling of want that drives them to pray. Who doubts that when the hungry and the thirsty lustily cry for food and drink, it is not a Whately, a Mill, or a Hamilton, but nature, that prompts them to do so? Man feels a want, and naturally prays for its removal. Evidently, prayer in all such cases is but the spontaneous outpouring of the mind, and is not a reflective process. Are you not aware of the wide distinction which lies between these two processes of the mind—the one, in which it resorts to the formal processes of reasoning and inference,—the other, in which it acts instinctively and spontaneously, actuated by certain deep natural impulses thoroughly independent of reflection?

I.—Certainly it is absurd to say, that when we pray for any physical necessities, we ply the canons of logic. We want to eat, because we are hungry; we want to drink, because we are thirsty. There is not the least shadow of ratiocination, of inference from premises, of *Because* and *Therefore* in such cases. Prayer springs outright from the sense of want.

B.—If so, would it not be ridiculous, nay, hideously unnatural if suffering from intense hunger I were to go to one of your professors of logic, and say, "Good Sir, please demonstrate to me, on strictly philosophical grounds, the propriety of asking for

food before I go to any body for it—for I must satisfy my logical faculties ere I do any thing ? ”

I.—Really that would be ridiculous, nay, it would be sheer madness to do so. All this I admit, and, I think, any body who has common sense would admit it. But you have not solved the main problem—to wit, the philosophical validity of prayer to God. Do you mean to extend the arguments which you have adduced in the case of eating and drinking to spiritual prayers to God ?

B.—Certainly. For what is prayer in the theological acceptance of the term ? Have you not already defined it to be a petition to God for the removal of spiritual wants ? If so, it is evident that the arguments I have already advanced apply to it with full force. As I ask mortal man for food because it is essential to the sustenance of my body, so I pray to my God for spiritual blessings which are essential to the sustenance of my soul. In both cases a deep want, a pressing and irresistible necessity is the origin of prayer : in neither is there any reference to logic.

I.—You should be more explicit.

B.—The sinner remorsefully awakened to corruptions and iniquities of his life, smarts day and night under the compunctions of conscience, feels the want of deliverance, and looking up to the All-Merciful, humbly prays :—“ Lord, deliver me from my sins, relieve me from the agonies of remorse O Thou Merciful Saviour ! save me, for I am intensely suffering.” He who beset with a host of powerful temptations becomes unsteady, and vacillates between desire and duty, feels his own weakness and incompetency, and, thoroughly bewildered and confounded, kneels down before the Almighty, and says :—“ Inspire me, God Almighty ! with strength and energy that I may triumph over temptations, and preserve my soul safe against their encroachments. I am weak :

my heart fails me. O Lord, make me strong that I may never swerve from Thee." The virtuous man, visited with a severe calamity, feels himself cast down, loses the sweet serenity of his soul, and prayerfully says to God :—" O Thou Father of the fatherless ! O Thou Helper of the helpless ! lay on my troubled heart Thy balmy hands. Vouchsafe unto me forbearance and patience, that I may meekly suffer all calamities, and glorify Thee even in the midst of tribulation." The persecuted missionary lifts his eyes to the Lord, and prays :—" Holy God ! reveal Thy benign face unto me, and fill me with courage and enthusiasm. Thousands of enemies are around me, and are ever and anon hurling the deadly arrows of persecution against me. Fix my heart in Thee, O Lord, that the face of mortal man may not daunt me. Make truth dearer to me than life." Consider these cases, my good friend, and say, whether such prayers are the elaborated results of logic, or whether they are not, like prayers for bodily necessities, the spontaneous outpourings of our nature. Hath not the soul its hungerings and thirstings as the body hath ? Does not man spontaneously pray for physical as well as spiritual sustenance and health ? When the body aileth do we not implore the physician to give us aid ? When the soul is diseased, do we not pray to the Healer of the soul for relief, and health ? When the child is hungry does it not instinctively run to its affectionate father, and cry for food ? When our souls hunger after righteousness do we not instinctively run to our Supreme Father, and beseech Him to feed us and nourish us ? If you ask me why I pray to God, I will say—not because logic or psychology teaches me to do so—not because my school-master insists on my doing so, but because the deep wants of my soul drive me to the necessity of praying to Him Who is my Father and my Friend.

And if your profound logicians attempt to deter me from prayer, on the ground of what they generally call its philosophical fallacy, I shall say unto them,—Can ye prevent the hungry from asking for food? Ye cannot then prevent the soul from praying for the “bread of life.”

I.—No more, no more. I am convinced that prayer is not the result of logical processes. It is but a wish of the heart—an expression of the soul's wants. It is a prompting of our spiritual instincts.

B.—If so, would it not be ridiculous for me to come to you, and say :—“Demonstrate to me the philosophical propriety of prayer ere you can expect me to adopt it : for as a reasonable creature I must satisfy my reason ere I do any thing”

I.—Verily as ridiculous as the case you have already mentioned, where the hungry look for syllogistical arguments to be convinced that they ought to ask for food. So far, well. I fully admit that prayer is spontaneous, and not reflective. But what if it is spontaneous? I question its uses. You may say you are impelled by want to pray to God : but I feel no such want, I feel no necessity for prayer. How then can I reasonably engage myself in it unless you can satisfactorily prove its utility? Surely, I ought not to pray unless I am assured that I will bring home some good thereby. What imaginable good can accrue from your mutterings, your half-shut eyes, your limbs screwed up in a stiff and uncomfortable kneeling posture? Discharge your duties, strive to keep a pure heart and a clean conscience, and do good to your brethren : this is all that you have to do, if you wish to be really good and great ; and for all that I would be the first person to give you credit. But it is shocking to see men of good sense addressing the air for hours together, and giving away their earnestness to the winds, and thus making a sad

waste of their energies and time. Let theologians say what they will, I cannot but deny the utility of prayer, and steadfastly maintain that men may be religious and virtuous without any prayer. Witness some of the great men of our country : they do not pray, for they think it unreasonable and unnecessary to pray and yet they possess a commendable character ; they are honest, benevolent, and philanthropic souls.

B.—How can you say that prayer is useless if you have never personally tried its utility ? Would it not be absurd if having never tasted sugar I were to say it produces a sensation of bitterness ? Let those only who have prayed say, whether prayer produces any beneficial effects or not, and whether they can do away with it in their religious pursuits. Do you think that man can be religious without prayer ? Is not that a mere assumption ? I had rather believe that the world can exist without God—that a house can stand without a basis—that man can live without life, than that religion can exist without prayer. For what is religion ? Is it the pompous distribution of alms to thousands of indigent men ? Is it the inauguration of a magnificent college, or the promotion of a social reform ? Is it mere charity, or meekness, or compassion, or civility ? Indeed a man may have one or all of these qualities, and yet he may not be religious. That man is religious who does every thing for his salvation, who has made God the centre of all his thoughts and feelings and words and actions. That man is religious who has triumphed over the world, and consecrated his soul to God. There is in man an incessant struggle between the world and God, desire and duty, the senses and the soul, flesh and spirit ; and it is in the triumph of the latter over the former that religion consists. If this is religion, say—can any one attain to it without prayer ? Can man buffet the formidable waves of

worldliness without invoking the Divine aid ? Can he, in the dreadful battle-field of life successfully shield himself from all the assaults of sin, and baffle the artful manœuvres of temptations by his unaided exertions alone ? Can he establish the kingdom of holiness in his heart without the aid of the Fountain of Holiness ? Oh no, my friend, his unaided energies are not equal to so hard a fight—so awful a trial. Being in the midst of the darkness of the world—let him possess ever so many good qualities—man cannot enjoy godliness without God's aid. But should you persist in believing otherwise, as well might you maintain that when scorched by the rays of the torrid sun you can feel the sensation of cold, or when completely benumbed by freezing cold you can feel the sensation of heat. Ask that man who is just reclaimed from sin why he prays, and he will tell you, it is not possible to become pious without Divine aid. Ask that man who has made much progress in religion why he prays, and he will say, it is not possible to sustain piety without Divine aid. With prayer you must begin religion, with prayer you must continue it. As a nurse prayer fosters and nourishes religion in its infancy ; as a faithful friend, it encourages and helps it in its manhood ; and as a physician, it restores its healthful tone when it is deranged. Thus whatever stage of religion we view, we find prayer is essential to it. Prayer is the life of religion. It is the "pillar of religion, the key of paradise"—so says the Koran. Take away prayer, and our religious constitution, deprived of its life-blood, soon becomes extinct. O my friend, we must needs pray to God. He is our strength : He is our joy : He is our all. Wherein lies the strength of infants but in weeping and crying before their parents ? Wherein lies our strength but in praying to our Father ? O what priceless treasures does prayer

bring to us ! How affectionately does our Loving Father listen to our prayers, and supply our spiritual wants ! Think not, my friend, that we address the winds, that our prayers are driven back upon us, and bring home no good. Out of His inexhaustible storehouse of blessings doth the Merciful God always give whatsoever His prayerful children want. Whoever humbly approacheth Him, and sincerely prayeth, returneth with abundant blessings. Prayer makes the weak powerful, the timid heroic, the dejected hopeful, the corrupt righteous, and the ignorant wise. Prayer wipes off the tears from the cheek of the afflicted, converts the gloomy caverns of penury into abodes of prosperity and peace, crowns the head of the child of adversity with the royal diadem. Prayer removes impurities from the sinner's heart, and drags him away from the hall of sensual extravagances into the holy mansions of God. Prayer is the light of the bewildered sojourner in life's mazy path. It is the buoy which the unfortunate soul, carried adrift along the violent currents of worldliness, may take hold of, and be saved from sinking. It is the staff of the weak, the old, and the helpless. It is the holy minister of religion that solves the doubts of inquirers, teaches saving truths, and fills the soul with faith. It is the lovely angel that strews over death-bed the flowers of joy and hope, comfort and peace, and conveys the departing soul adorned with heavenly graces to the blessed regions of immortality. At once our light and strength, our friend and instructor, it leads us "from untruth to truth, from darkness to light, from death to immortality." Prayer lifts the soul above the platform of all that is earthly, corrupt and mean, and ushers it into the very presence of the All-Holy. When we are brought into His holy presence, the sins and sorrows and vexations of the world cannot encroach upon us, its perishable splen-

dours cannot allure us ; we are above its sin and temptations ; the soul feels itself in the midst of Holiness and Purity, drinks the sweets of pure divine communication, and enjoys a serenity and a bliss unspeakable. It forgets its own weakness and infirmities, and is inspired with heavenly fire and enthusiasm. Thus inspired, man walks in the path of life with invincible courage and unyielding resoluteness—fearing no earthly potentate for Omnipotence is on his side, yet loving all for his soul is filled with brotherly affection—magnifying the name of his Creator with fiery eloquence ; and at last closes his earthly career amidst joy and glory immeasurable, chanting hosannas to the All-Holy. Such are the salutary effects of prayer. Such is the beatific life of the prayerful ! Oh I grieve to see one disparage prayer—that inestimably precious gift of Providence. Deprive me not, I beseech you, ye who scoff at prayer, deprive me not of that precious gift—that dear treasure of my heart. Raise not your ruthless hands to sacrifice the true life and vitality of my soul. Nurtured in the bosom of Prayer may I remain faithful to her for ever and ever. May the Lord teach me to pray without ceasing, to live and die in prayer. May He help me to seek Him prayerfully and abide in Him prayerfully.

I.—Blessed are they who pray to God, for they enjoy a heavenly life ! Blessed are those tender, innocent, and simple souls that spontaneously run to their Father's feet, tell Him their wants, and are fed and nourished by Him. Oh how happy they are ! How enviable their lot ! O brother, what a precious and saving lesson have you given me this day ! Be it my ambition henceforward to be included among God's prayerful children ; be it my desire and pleasure to offer my heart's prayers to Him every day, that I may daily grow in wisdom and purity and faith. Up,

up, my soul, from the slough of prayerlessness. Fling away thy arrogance, thy impious pride, and with prayerful humility kneel down before thy Father.

“ Oh Lord, I have dishonoured Thee. Pride hath ruined me by leading me astray. Forgive me, Merciful Lord ! I beseech Thee. Thou art my Father : teach me, Thy corrupt child, to pray unto Thee all the days I live. Help me Lord. O help me.”

B.—May God satisfy your spiritual aspirations, my beloved brother ! Repose your faith in Him, and He will bless you, and help you on.

RELIGION OF LOVE.

LOVE EVERY MAN AS THY BROTHER.

No. 3.]

[August, 1860.

I.—Since you convinced me of the importance of prayer I have been earnestly endeavouring to cultivate a habit of prayerfulness,—and oh ! how many struggles, difficulties and anxieties have embarrassed my heart. My thoughts and feelings have all been bestirred to a state of excitement and warfare which I cannot well describe ; methinks my whole spiritual constitution has been convulsed by some mysterious agency. Yet, however—thanks to our salutary precepts—despite all struggles and agitation, the sweet pleasures of growing religion have soothed my heart. Many a temptation I have had to sacrifice, many a favourite pursuit to relinquish, many a pleading of the heart for carnal enjoyments to overcome ; and each such successful achievement has been a source of pleasure in nowise earthly Firm now is my conviction, my good friend, that prayer is beneficial—that in a devotional attitude at the feet of the Holy Father the soul realizes precious blessings which metaphysical heads may deny, but which those who have enjoyed them shall always value and vindicate. May those of my intelligent countrymen who scoff at prayer try its uses on the ground of experience, instead of theorizing on the subject in a spirit of sarcasm !

B.—Oh for the day when my enlightened countrymen shall be a prayerful brotherhood ! In the present diseased state of our society prayer shall be as the

sovereign remedy. It shall enlighten, ennoble and regenerate our country. May Providence send that blessing to this wretched land and thereby rescue its people from the countless evils under which they are groaning !

I.—I owe you, my friend, a “debt immense of endless gratitude,” for I feel that you have not merely initiated me in one particular virtue—namely prayer, but you have placed my whole soul in the way of salvation. But hear me, my good friend, a serious difficulty has lately come across my path. I have been sorely perplexed with considerations about the choice of a creed. I have heard an orthodox Hindu say—Of what avail is prayer if not accompanied with the offering of holy flowers to Durga and Kalee ? I have heard many a Christian say—Engage in prayers and devotions every day, every hour, if you choose ; do any thing for your soul’s improvement, there is no hope of salvation unless you believe in the atonement of Jesus Christ. So each creed identifying religion with its own dogmas seeks to drive me away from all hopes of religious improvement. So each church reckoning itself the only accredited dispenser of salvation summarily consigns the lot of every dissenter to perdition. Thus alas ! my prayerfulness seems unavailing. In vain have I traversed the vast field of theology to find an undisputed creed. Worried and hopeless I now sit down with the conviction that “it is easier for a camel to pass through the needle’s eye” than for an impartial inquirer to find a resting-place in the tumultuous sea of theological polemics, where he can say to his heart’s content—This is the happy land of true religion. Tell me, friend, what your ideas are on this important subject, for I deeply feel the necessity of establishing my heart upon some fixed system of faith.

B.—That resting-place, O my brother, which your

troubled heart is searching for is Brahmoism. In that heaven-born religion you shall find peace and comfort, truth for your understanding and salvation for your soul.

I.—That is the very language of sectarianism ; the stamp of bigotry lies on its face. Heaven-born religion ! Truth for the understanding, and salvation for the soul !—So every sectarian speaks of his own faith. Indeed he who is in quest of true faith goes as if through a market where each creed-monger comes with his own creed, holds it up as the best, and abuses his neighbour should he decry its worth ; there is no creed which is not heaven-born, there is none which is not the holy way to salvation ;—so that the unfortunate inquirer is obliged to return filled with vexation, disappointment and despair. Oh ! it is ridiculous—it is shocking. Excuse me, my friend, your bigoted adherence to your own religious system is no reason why I should embrace it, for on that ground I have to embrace and reject by turns all those systems of religion which prevail in the world. Think not that I say so from any special prepossessions against your creed. Impartially examine the religious history of the world, and tell me does it not at once throw the mind into confusion and bewilderment. What a countless number of churches, sects and creeds does it exhibit ! What an endless variety of doctrines and tenets, rituals and modes of worship ! What an appalling spectacle of strifes, schisms, and even war, massacre, and bloodshed ! Hinduism and Islamism, Buddhism and Zoroastrianism, Protestantism and Roman Catholicism, Methodism and Socinianism, Trinitarianism and Unitarianism, and thousand other *isms* are hotly engaged, with weapons offensive and defensive, in establishing their divine origin and infallibility ! Revelations arrayed against revelations, incarnations

against incarnations, miracles against miracles, infallibilities against infallibilities, pulpits against pulpits, missionaries against missionaries, tracts against tracts ! Inexplicable anomalies ! From such unaccountable phenomena to evolve a meaning, from such a chaotic confusion to bring out order and light is a task which defies human reason.

B.—Certainly. Whoever goes through the awful perplexities of theological polemics in order to ascertain and enjoy true faith must pass his days in fruitless speculation ; nay he may perchance be eventually enshrouded and entombed amidst the horrors of despairing unbelief. Woe to the unfortunate inquirer after true religion who reposes his faith in the decisions of synods and churches ! Indeed many a simple heart is ready to resound the voice of A. Kempis :—" I am weary of reading, I am weary of hearing ; in Thee alone (O God) is the sum of my desires. Let all teachers be silent, let the whole creation be dumb before Thee, and do Thou only speak to my soul."

I.—What then is to be done ? To tell you frankly although my religious sentiments animate me and comfort me, they can hardly prevent clouds of doubt from overhanging my mind when I see the outward phenomena of the religious world ; and sometimes I have been even driven to confess that religion is a mystery, and its history a mere chronicle of anomalies, persecution, conflicts, and war. Tell me, good friend, as an unbiassed and truth-loving soul, and not as a bigoted sectarian, what I ought to do in respect to the choice of a religion. Where shall I find rest ? Where shall I enjoy peace ?

B.—In Brahmoism, in the sweet religion of Brahmoism. Speak not to me of sects and parties. I cannot recommend you to sever yourself from the mass of mankind, and cling to an exclusive creed. Away

with sectarian creeds and dogmas ; away with the malign spirit of sectarianism.

I.—If I have to turn away from sectarian creeds, with what earthly reason can I accept Brahmoism ? Is not Brahmoism a special creed like Hinduism and Christianity and Mahomedanism ? Do not the Brahmos, like the followers of other religions, constitute a sect ?

B.—O no, my friend. Brahmoism is anti-sectarian ; catholicity is its distinguishing characteristic ; love is its very life. It is not the religion of a particular community, epoch or country ; it is universal religion ; it is " Human Catholic Religion." It is this which clearly distinguishes Brahmoism from all systems of faith. While they are founded upon the peculiarities of time and place, Brahmoism stands upon a basis co-extensive with human nature—upon principles that are catholic and universal. While they seek to divide mankind into distinct and hostile parties, Brahmoism goes forth to bring all mankind to a state of unity and harmony. While they confine their love within their own respective sects, Brahmoism extends the holy current of love to the whole human race. Sectarianism limits and distorts man's views and sentiments ; Brahmoism expands his soul and enlarges his conceptions. The former is a battle-field in which communities strenuously fight against each other, actuated by inveterate jealousy or the maddening spirit of fanaticism. The latter is the kingdom of peace in which all mankind are a brotherhood, and love reigns supreme. O what a prodigious havoc has sectarianism made in the world ! What inhuman deeds, what appalling atrocities have not been committed by it ? The rack, the guillotine, and all sorts of powerful engines of torture and destruction have been pressed to its service. Amidst war-cries, shrieks of woe, and groanings of despair, its triumph has been celebrated, its banners have been crimsoned

with the blood of thousands. It is profoundly distressing to witness such a scene. Such is the history of sectarianism. To-day, as in ancient times, its spirit is the same. Civilization has not exterminated it, it has only rendered its manifestations less revolting and hideous. Bickerings, jealousy, mutual antipathy and even fanatical abhorrence shed their baneful effects far and wide ; the press teems with works full of acrimonious abuse, defamation and anathemas. Opinion is all in all ; the virtues of a dissenter and the vices of an adherent are looked upon with comparative indifference ; to say yea or nay to a dogma is sufficient to insure the verdict of salvation or perdition ; the triumph of a party is more eagerly sought for than the moral and religious amelioration of mankind ; church establishments, instead of harmoniously and earnestly co-operating to promote the true interests of the people, are busily employed about matters of etymology and ethnology, geography and tradition ; and while untold millions are sinking in corruption and iniquity, ministers of religion, and guardians of churches, oblivious of their sacred responsibilities, are fulminating anathemas against each other. O my friend, be not a sectarian. Sectarianism is opposed to the very vital principle of religion,—to wit, love. Sacrifice all that is exclusive, narrow, and antagonistic—sacrifice all prejudices for time, place, and party—sacrifice all that soweth discord and unbrotherly feelings between man and man, if you seek true religion, for true religion is universal love. How can you hate others, treat them spitefully, and separate yourself from them, in the name of religion—in the name of that whose very essence is—Love God as thy Father, and man as thy brother ? Certainly the object of religion is to unite and bring together—not to separate ; to consolidate the whole mass of mankind—not to divide

it into countless sections ; to annihilate, not to raise partitions ; to attract, not repel ; to make a brother, not an enemy. This is the very object of Brahmoism, that sweet religion of universal love. Her mission is to summon together the various sections of humanity, and establish among them a peaceful and blessed brotherhood. Love, union and peace are her watch-words. A Brahmo sees all men in relation to God. " He sees all in God and God in all and despiseth none." His soul is full of love, and he hails and hugs every man as his dear brother, in spite of all differences of denomination and creed, caste and colour. He is above party-spirit, the peculiarities of country and age cannot fetter his mind. The world is his home—the human race his family—God his Father. O how sweet his brotherly love ! how exalting, and ennobling its influences ! Cutting asunder all artificial and dogmatic bonds, it teaches man to realize his natural relations, and affectionately discharge the duties which he owes to his Father and to his brethren. Before that sacred feeling whatever is low, narrow, and earthy flies away as mists before the morning sun ;—jealousy, hatred, antipathy, selfishness, and all those evil passions which embitter life, and separate man from man at once disappear—the joys of heaven overflow the soul—duty becomes agreeable, and virtue amiable. Blessed are they whose hearts are filled with the sweets of brotherly love ! Verily it is " heaven upon earth " to live in a state of brotherhood. Oh when shall that day of universal peace and joy arrive, when every man shall exclaim from the depth of his heart :—God is my Father, man is my brother ? Say, is not a Christian, a Hindu, a Mahomedan, your brother ? Is not every man, whether an inhabitant of Africa or Asia, Europe or America born of the same Father ? Are not the white and the black races both works

of His hand ? Is He not the Father of the rich and the poor, the wise and the illiterate ? Is He not my Father, your Father, and the Father of all men besides ? If so then perish sectarianism from the face of the earth—perish all that fosters discord and strife among mankind—perish all that rends God's holy family into antagonistic sects—perish all that prevents the kingdom of religion from being the abode of heavenly love, the land of holy alliance ! Say with a loving heart unto Christians, Hindus, Mahomedans and Buddhist—come all ye religious sects—let us all fling away sectarian opinions, sectarian antagonisms, sectarian bigotry, and meet together on the common ground of Universal Religion. Children of God ! beloved brethren ! Come let us all rally round the holy standard of our common Father, and glorify His name. Brahmoism ! O thou sweet religion of heaven ! Unfurl thy banners of love and peace, and bind all countries and nations by the sacred ties of brotherly affection. May thy kingdom day by day extend over the whole world, and may all nations unite in a holy chorus, and joyfully chant the sweet anthem—“ The Fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man.”

I.—Certainly, my friend, the spirit of sectarianism is hostile to religion, and methinks religion and universal love are so vitally connected with each other that the former cannot exist with the latter. If then Brahmoism seeks to turn away men from sectarian wrangling and dogmatic warfare, and establish among them a peaceful brotherhood, there is no question but that it has a sacred and heavenly mission to fulfil. So far Brahmoism recommends itself to the faith of every unprejudiced soul. But all that you have said proves only the purity of Brahmic *feeling* : and unless I am also satisfied with the *doctrines* and *tenets* of your religion, I must hesitate to accept it. There

are diverse knotty questions, such as those of revelation, atonement, salvation, &c., which must be thoroughly sifted ere any one can form a correct idea of your creed.

B.—I shall try my best, beloved friend, to satisfy you, but as the subject is too comprehensive and important to be disposed of in a few words, we may put it off till our next interview.

-

BASIS OF BRAHMOISM.

BRAHMOISM STANDS UPON THE ROCK OF INTUITION
AND IS ABOVE THE FLUCTUATIONS OF
SECTARIAN OPINIONS.

No. 4.]

[September, 1860.

I.—I must confess, my friend, that although I had formerly a very low opinion of your creed, the simple argument which you so clearly and elaborately expounded the other day, viz—that Brahmoism is a catholic and anti-sectarian creed, has drawn my heart towards it. But, as I have already told you, it is only with regard to the feeling of love which it cherishes that I am prepared to admit the excellence of your religion. You must allow me now to understand your doctrines, that I may impartially ascertain whether Brahmoism unites Love and Truth—whether it consists with reason at the same time that it satisfies the heart.

B.—I deeply rejoice that you have felt a desire to investigate the holy doctrines of Brahmoism. May Providence enable you to gratify your desire, and may He lead your truth-seeking mind to truth! Well, tell me what doctrine you wish me to explain to you.

I.—Before you proceed to the exposition of any particular doctrine, I wish you will enlighten me on the foundation of Brahmoism; for it may be that your creed is baseless—a castle built upon the air. In such matters methinks it is our duty to look into the basis ere we examine the superstructure. I am

the more inclined to take up this topic in the outset, as I have come to learn that Brahmoism stands upon no book-revelation ; it is a relation with a fixed Word of God to rest upon. Upon what then is it founded ? From what source does it derive its tenets ? One must naturally suspect your creed is but a congeries of doctrines and theories, drawn up by a few Hindu minds in conformity with their own ideas and tastes, —or at best a compilation of doctrines from this book and that ; so that destitute of a fixed basis it must necessarily be dependent upon circumstances, and liable to be agitated by controversies, modified by opinions, and perhaps destroyed by advanced intelligence.

B.—True, Brahmoism rests on no written revelation ; neither does it hang on the opinions of particular persons or communities. It depends not upon the fugitive phenomena incident to age or country. Its basis is in the depths of human nature.

I.—Really I cannot understand how a religion which recognises no revelation, and which depends wholly upon the mind can be said to stand upon a fixed foundation. To rest a faith upon the fleeting phenomena of the mind is but to rest it upon an ever-shifting basis. Do not material differences exist among men with regard to almost every subject of reflection and thought ? Does not even the same mind display countless phases of opinion at different times ?

B.—Yes, reflection and judgment do differ ; opinions do vary. But Brahmoism is founded upon those principles of the mind which are above, anterior to, and independent of reflection—which the variations of opinion cannot alter or affect. It stands upon intuitions

I.—What ! Intuitions ! Do you mean to say that there are some principles in the mind which do not

depend upon reflection ? I am afraid what you say is a curious accommodation of philosophy to your creed, and I for one must protest against it. It is ridiculous to see people, in default of a principle upon which to establish the basis of their religion, fabricate one by their own ingenuity in defiance of all philosophy. It is a pity that theology should thus run counter to philosophy. Don't you think it is an undeniable fact that all truths are the result of reflection ? However let me know what is that particular principle of the mind which you call intuition.

B.—Intuition denotes those cognitions which our nature immediately apprehends—those truths which we perceive independently of reflection. Are you not aware that our intelligent nature has two departments—the intuitive and reflective ? Surely you should not as an advocate of philosophy deny the validity, much less the very existence of intuition.

I.—It would be useless to cavil in this way. I wish you would prove at once a single fact of our intellectual consciousness—a single cognition—a single truth which does not result from reflection, but is, as you say, immediately cognizable.

B.—To take the simplest case, tell me how you get at the knowledge of self. Is not this an immediate and spontaneous cognition ? Do you arrive at it through any logical formula ? Tell me likewise how you come to know the reality of the external world. Is it not true that logic can never give you this knowledge ? When you see a rose, all that you are conscious of is the sensation of that rose ; but how could you, even if all the principles of logic were pressed to your service, infer from that sensation the existence of a real rose outside ? Is not the reality of external objects immediately cognizable by all men ? Tell me also whence comes your belief that every object is a substance, if nothing can be known

of it through the senses beyond a number of qualities. How do you know that every effect has a cause? It is needless to multiply instances; those already adduced will, I hope, convince you that some of our cognitions are not the results of reflection.

I.—I cannot but admit that the truths you have alluded to are immediately cognizable, and independent of reasoning. Are they not identical with the First Truths of certain philosophers?

B.—Yes. You may call them intuition or First Truths as you choose; it is a mere matter of nomenclature. They have been variously designated by philosophers. The fact is that intuition has several distinguishing characteristics, according to which it has received corresponding names.

I.—Will you just proceed to explain these characteristics?

B.—Most cheerfully, but the subject is so comprehensive that I can give you at present only the general outlines of it. The first mark of intuition is, as I have already intimated, immediacy. Intuitive truth is directly cognizable; it is seen face to face; it is perceptible, if I may apply the word to spiritual objects. Cause, substance, power infinite, duty, are all immediately apprehensible; no reflection can give us these ideas. Hence some philosophers have applied the term Sense to intuition. We often meet with such expressions as Moral Sense, Sense of Duty, Spiritual Sense, Senses of the Soul, clearly indicating that as by the bodily eye we see outward objects, so by intuition we see spiritual realities. Another mark of intuition is spontaneity. The mind apprehends intuitive truths spontaneously, instinctively, without any voluntary effort. They spring outright from our nature; they are not wrought out by reasoning. They are facts of our constitution; we cannot create or destroy them if we will; they do not depend upon

the fiat of our volitions. Hence though we may ignore them in theory oftentimes they are found to govern us practically. Metaphysical theorists held for a long time the ideality of external objects, but there is hardly a sane man who practically adheres to this shocking theory. Some people seem to deny God, and bring forward various arguments to show the plausibility of such denial, but often do circumstances occur in which the intuitions force themselves up from the depths of their constitution, and vindicate their rights with a practical potency which theories in vain try to gainsay. The personality of our nature many have denied, and yet every man practically believes that there are actions which he may do or not do as he chooses. Thus you see that intuition is spontaneous, natural, involuntary, permanent and practical. Hence it has been denominated Spontaneous Reason, Natural Light, Instinctive Beliefs, Practical Reason, &c. Another mark of intuition is universality. If intuitive truths are facts of our nature, and are dependent of our will, they are universal. They are in the possession of the wise and the illiterate—of the rich and the poor. Hence they have been called Catholic Conviction, Common Sense. Another mark of intuition is originality. Intuitive truths are not inferences from certain premises. They are primitive truths: they do not originate in reflection. They furnish materials for reasoning and scientific reflection—themselves underived and primitive. They are the starting-points of all our higher knowledge, as sensations are of all inferior knowledge. Hence they have been styled First Truths, Primitive Cognitions. The last characteristic I have to mention is that intuitions are self-evident. They are axiomatic truths which do not admit of demonstration. Every effect must have a cause—is a proposition the truth of which no one disputes, yet no one can

demonstrate. Intuitions require no light of evidence to exhibit them : they shine in their own light. They are accordingly not merely cognitions but convictions and beliefs. We not only know, but firmly believe, that every effect has a cause, that good should be done, and evil avoided &c. Hence intuitions have been termed *A priori* Truth, Axioms, Faith. These are the principal characteristics of intuitive cognitions. I presume you are now prepared to determine whether intuition is a fact of consciousness or not.

I.—Not until you convince me that the doctrine of intuition stands upon the authority of eminent philosophers. For that doctrine may be for aught I know a relic of some of those false systems of metaphysics which have been superseded by the purer philosophy of modern times. Can you show on reliable authority that it is in harmony with true and universal philosophy ?

B.—I could cite innumerable testimonies in favour of that doctrine from ancient as well as modern philosophy. I will enumerate only the principal ones for our present purpose. Among the ancients you will find Socrates, Plato, Cicero and Aristotle ; among the moderns Descartes, Kant, Reid, Dugald Stewart, Malbranche, Victor Cousin, Coleridge, Morell, M'Cosh, and even that unrivalled thinker Sir William Hamilton :—so that there is scarcely any philosopher of celebrity in ancient or modern times—excepting of course the materialistic school—who does not in some shape or other afford his testimony in support of the doctrine of intuition. The fact is that philosophy far from being inimical to this doctrine is suicidal without it ; her legitimate province being simply the investigation and application of the intuitions of the mind. Is not the doctrine of intuition then the true and abiding philosophy ? “The doctrine of common sense,” says Hamilton, “is the one catholic and perennial philosophy.”

I.—I have no objection to urge against the philosophical validity of the doctrine of intuition. But how would you apply it to the subject under consideration, viz.—the basis of your religion ?

B.—I'll tell you presently. You will admit, I presume, from what I have said that there are two distinct kinds of knowledge—the one dependent upon the arbitrary use of our individual judgments, and therefore variable and contingent, the other above and independent of reasoning, and therefore universal and permanent ; so that amidst the innumerable varieties of opinion among men there is the fixed ground of intuitive conviction. You have no doubt respecting this ;—have you ?

I—Not the least.

B—You can easily understand then, I suppose, how what you have admitted with regard to knowledge in general applies to religious knowledge. When religion lies in our intuitive consciousness, its truths we directly perceive, we require no argumentation, they approach us as self-evident realities. But when it passes on to our reflective consciousness we exercise our respective judgments and form different theories. In the one case nature is our guide and authority ; in the other our arbitrary judgment. In the one case no evidence is needed ; in the other we call for demonstration, we must sift the premises ere we accept the conclusion. In the sphere of intuition religion is natural, spontaneous, catholic, and living : in the sphere of reflection it is apt to become abnormal, sectarian, and dogmatic. Intuitive religion is a direct revelation of truths. It does not derive its doctrines from books of men ; it is a code of primitive truths—the teachings of nature. It involves nothing peculiar to individuals or communities ; it stands upon the universal consciousness of humanity. Thus stands Brahmoism—heaven-born and eternal Theism—far

above the peculiarities of age and country and the infinite diversities of theological opinion.

I.—How can Brahmoism be universal and eternal when there are so many churches in the world? Your assertion looks very well in theory, but it does not hold good practically. How do you account for this anomaly?

B.—As in the mind of the individual there are on the one side natural and spontaneous beliefs, which constitute the identity of his nature with that of other men, and on the other his own judgments and opinions which are peculiar to him or to a particular sect; so in the consciousness of humanity there is the deep-rooted religion of intuition in spite of the shifting phenomena of sectarian polemics. Creeds rise and fall, churches flourish and fade, as opinions change and judgments are modified; but intuitive religion always abides—unextinguished and unextinguishable. Individuals may hold fast to unnatural dogmas, nations may fall prostrate before unnatural systems of religion, but human nature is not thereby annihilated, not a single truth of intuition is lost. Psychology shows us the fact that there are two distinct spheres of religious knowledge in the individual—the intuitive and the reflective. History illustrates it and verifies it in the actual religious beliefs and pursuits of mankind at large. Thus what you see in the individual in miniature you see largely in the history of humanity, for history is but the stage on which the internal principles of the mind exhibit themselves and play their parts. It is quite evident then that it is arbitrary reflection on the one hand which lies at the bottom of religious polemics—of differences, schisms and sectarian antagonisms. It is intuition on the other hand which lies underneath those immutable and eternal truths which belong to all mankind, transcend the peculiarities of time and

place, survive all vicissitudes and revolutions, buoy up above the fluctuations of sectarian opinions, and often shed their holy effulgence through the surrounding gloom of the grossest superstition and idolatry.

I.—I have nothing more to say in reference to the philosophy of the subject under discussion. But it strikes me that your religion thus exalted above all external and tangible things, above book-revelations and outward authority has too much of abstraction in it, and is thereby practically powerless and ineffectual. It wants that capacity of "coming home to our bosom and business," and exerting living influence on our soul, which less abstract religions possess.

B.—I'll me not that Brahmoism is a religion of abstractions. The very reverse is the fact. Brahmoism is a living religion. It reveals truth immediately, and with all the vividness and force of direct perception. How animating for example is a Brahmo's knowledge of God! He does not seek God through abstractions and generalizations. He has not to carve out his God by the chisel of logic; he does not worship an abstract metaphysical ideal of the Divinity, destitute of charms, and lifeless. Nor on the other hand is his God a historical personage, cognizable through the medium of representation and with the aid of proper evidences—and withal a God "that *was* but not *is*." His God is neither a logical nor historical divinity. His God is an ever-living and ever-present Reality that can be seen and felt. No teacher, no idea, no abstract proposition, no consecrated object acts as a mediator between him and God. He stands before his Father face to face. He beholds Him who is infinite in time and space, wisdom and power, love and holiness, and is at once enlivened and enraptured; then the clouds of doubt fly away, the soul is armed with indomitable faith, all the spiritual energies are quickened, and

love and joy sweeten the heart : then the soul falls at the feet of the All-Holy, saying—Life of my life ! how sweet is it to enjoy Thy presence and be encircled by Thy loving arms ! Blessed are they who instead of seeking God in books and abstract formularies—in the distance of space and time, see His loving face in the depths of their heart. Tell me now is not Brahmoism a living religion ; do not its doctrines come home to us ?

I.—Do you think your remarks are applicable to the intelligent as well as the illiterate ? How can the latter who know nothing about the doctrine of intuition realize the living influence of your creed ?

B.—You will easily understand that if you remember that Brahmoism is catholic. As by reason of the immediacy and spontaneity of its cognitions Brahmoism is a living faith, and not a religion of abstraction ; so by reason of their universality it is accessible to all. True the philosophy of intuition is limited to a few, for every man is not a philosopher. But intuition itself is universal propriety ; its truths are the patrimony of the human race. *Brahmoism* is co-extensive with human nature, though a few only can master *Brahmic theology*. Brahmoism is not confined to metaphysicians or historians. Metaphysical training is not an indispensable requisite to the knowledge of its truths ; scholarship is not the *sine qua non* of admission into our faith. Nature is the preceptor and the guide, she leads every simple, unsophisticated, and unbiassed man into the shrine of Brahmoism. The universe is the cathedral, nature the high-priest,—every man, whether an illiterate rustic or a profound philosopher, a throned monarch or a ragged clown, a native of Europe or of India, a man of the first or the nineteenth century, has access to his Father, and can worship and serve Him with faith and love. Do you suppose, my friend,

that the God of Love reveals Himself only to those who possess the means of a rich education and who have health and strength sufficient to take advantage of such means? Are wealth, influence, and academic lore the price of truth? If so, what an overwhelming majority of the human race, alas! are destined to live and die in spiritual ignorance! Has our Father provided nothing for their enlightenment; has He appointed no light to guide the untold millions of the lower and poorer classes of men? Adversity may darken the life of man, earthly teachers may forsake him, pulpits may be out of his reach, the light of education he may never enjoy—but what of that? Can penury estrange him from the Great Teacher? No. In the school of nature the poor rustic trains himself to the holy truths of religion, and learns to guide the vessel of life with the aid of piety and faith; nay his simple mind oftentimes displays a fervent and burning faith in God and the immortality of the soul, in comparison with which the most rigid and demonstrative conclusions of academic theology appear lifeless. O my friend, the Gracious Lord doth not forsake the poor. The heights of philosophy are not accessible to all; theological learning is a rare acquirement: but the vital truths of religion are attainable by all. That God is—that He is infinite in love, wisdom, and holiness—that there is a future state of existence, are first truths which do not require logic to comprehend. The deep problems of reflection may not be solvable by all; the living truths of intuition God hath given all men the means of knowing. In the depths of the soul hath He written in imperishable characters the simple doctrines of Theism which every one true to his nature may read

Behold then the grand final cause of this arrangement in our cognitive nature separating the intuitive from the reflective department of knowledge. What

a wonderful proof of Divine goodness does it afford ! Imagine how unfortunate a creature would man have been had the vital functions of his bodily organism depended upon his will. Would we not have been every moment liable to death if respiration and the circulation of blood were to take place like the movements of our hands and feet, only when willed ? But such is not the case. By the providence of God the lungs continually inhale and exhale air, the vital fluid unceasingly performs its work independently of our will. When we are engrossed in business, when anxieties perturb the heart, and make us forget body, when death-like sleep reduces us to an unconscious state, the God of Love conducts with his hands the internal vital machinery of the body. So has He in His infinite wisdom placed the vital truths of religion above the reach of our will. In what an awful state would humanity have been if truth were yours or mine, if it depended upon the arbitrary decisions of individual judgments and the varying breath of popular opinion. But—blessed be the Merciful Lord—such is not the case. Let prejudices and errors overpower the individual mind, let revolutions after revolutions shake communities, let corrupt doctrines hallowed by time hold their supremacy over many a generation, nothing can destroy the intuitive truths of religion : they are above the reach of our will. The holy doctrines of Brahmoism abide for ever—let churches clamour, let sectarians differ ever so widely, let theological dogmatists give to the world thousand and then thousand shocking and monstrous theories. Glory be unto God ! His wisdom and love are boundless and unfathomable !

I.—The problem is almost solved. I am fully prepared to admit the philosophical validity of intuition as a fact of consciousness, its permanence as a historical fact, and its mighty efficacy as a source

of practical and living faith. I apprehend, however, your arguments would do very well if human nature remained in an uncorrupted and innocent state. In that case alone would a religion based upon nature be perfectly plausible and satisfactory. But perverted as the human mind is, a system of pure natural theism is simply useless. Survey mankind, and you will find scarcely a small percentage professing and following natural doctrines—so universal is the prevalence of unnatural ones. This therefore I urge, that as man has practically turned astray from a state of nature, Brahmoism is insufficient for knowledge as well as rectitude. My impression is that besides the teachings of nature, a written revelation from God is necessary, nay indispensable ; in other words Brahmoism though philosophically and doctrinally a correct system of faith needs the help of a book-revelation to supply its practical deficiencies. Do you not suppose that a Revelation is necessary ?

B.—I am glad you admit the philosophical validity of the basis of Brahmoism. Thus much for the present. We may discuss the subject of Revelation hereafter.

—

BRETHREN, LOVE YOUR FATHER.

HE FORSAKETH NONE OF US. MAY WE NEVER
FORSAKE HIM.

No. 5.]

[October, 1860.

* * * Is there then no help for me ? Is there no water of consolation in the whole earth to assuage the agonies of my heart ? Ruthless remorse ! how long will thy hideous scorpions thus harrow and torture me ? When wilt thou release this wretched sufferer ? Oh ! how insufferable are the agonies under which I am smarting ! How miserable and cheerless is my lot ! Neither day bringeth me rest nor night. Society hath no charms for me, neither hath solitude. Joy and peace have for ever forsaken me. Wherever I turn my eyes, all is gloomy and frightening. Father, mother, brother, wife, friend, have ye no power now to comfort my troubled heart ? Is there none to take pity on this vile wretch ? Has the whole world taken arms against me ? Oh ! I am harassed, I am confounded, I am dead. Remorse has made me desperate and frantic. Where is hell with all its appalling gloominess, its excruciating tortures, its undying fires, but in the mind of this depraved sinner. Break, my heart, then, I can bear no more : each moment is aggravating my sufferings and driving me to deeper desperation.—Oh think no more of it.—Think of it I must, for I am groaning

under its severities. Oh that accursed recollection—that intolerable thought,—rebellion against the Lord—defiance of my Father's commands—ingratitude to my Supreme Benefactor, my Creator, and Preserver! Foul and abominable iniquities!—Can I help remembering that absolutely helpless state in which I was when in my mother's womb. I knew myself not, how could I then seek my well-being: nor could any earthly friend look after me. Yet I grew day by day till I was fit for this world. Was not this owing to my Father's providence? When again I was ushered into this strange world I was profoundly ignorant of what was around me: I was at the mercy of external nature. Yet the wholesome milk of my mother's breast sustained me, and my body and mind went on developing themselves. Who placed this delicious sweet in the mother's breast—the only staff and hope of infancy—but the God of love? Thus protected by His bountiful providence I advanced in age, overcame uncounted ills which flesh is heir to, obtain power and wealth, wisdom and fame, and feasted my senses with those delights and luxuries which He has placed in the vast storehouse of nature. —O Lord, my God, to Thee I owe my life and all the pleasures of my life. Thou art the Life of my life—my Father and Friend for ever.—Never, never did my Father's mercy forsake me—never did He cease to caress and comfort me. Even when intoxicated with carnal enjoyments I turned astray from Him and wantonly revelled amidst the grossest debaucheries. He raised His warning voice, and sought to bring me back to Him. Though with despicable audacity I revolted against His authority and bade defiance to His will, with unabated affection He repeatedly said,—“Dear child abandon all that is evil and corrupt. Behold ruin is before thee. Beware: beware. Take advantage of thy Father's aid.” Still

heedless of His constant remonstrances I persevered in my ungodly career, and sank deeper and deeper in the mire of corruption—Oh monstrous ingratitude ! Oh unpardonable disobedience !—Obdurate heart ! is there not a jot of affection—a tittle of natural tenderness in thee ? Hast thou rebelled against thy Father ? So good, so beneficent, so full of loving-kindness ! Hast thou deserted Him ?—Woe then to me. My Father, my Friend, the only Light of my life I have lost. Gone is my joy, my strength, and my hope. Gone is all that makes life bearable. What an awful gloom hangs on me. Without my Father how appalling is this world ! Amidst its ten thousand horrors I live with none to befriend me. I look above, around and below me, and I see a heart-rending scene. I look to the east, and to the west, to the north and to the south, and I behold gigantic perils and difficulties staring me in the face. Methinks in the impenetrable darkness of midnight I am floating on the formidable billows of a vast atlantic,—blasts and hurricanes are howling around me—the dense clouds broadcast over the whole horizon are awfully contrasting themselves with occasional streaks of lightning—thunders are roaring over my head, and the terrific element on which I am floating is every moment hurling me up and down on its mighty surges. “ Is there none to help me ? ” I shriek aloud in bitter despair ; but alas ! my voice is drowned.—Or in some awful wilderness methinks I lie—a weak, helpless infant, with none to pity me, no affectionate mother to fondle and caress me, and press me within her secure arms. I pule and whine, but in vain : with tearful eyes I gaze around me for protection, but alas ! wolves and leopards are contending with each other to snap the thread of my helpless existence. Such art thou, O world, to me—thou land of terrors. Thou hast no benefactor,

no sympathising friend. What is society? A gathering of foreigners, no more : men unrelated to each other, and mindful of their own interests only. What are families, communities, and nations? What are the boasted relationships and friendships of this world? Oh! there is no common relation to bind men, no identity of interests to unite them. I dread society : there is nothing familiar or friendly in it. It is repulsive and appalling.—Where are now the beauties and pleasures of nature? The sun, and the moon, and the unnumbered small luminaries of the heaven shed but a feeble and pallid light. Zephyr's softest breezes can scarce be distinguished from the chill biting blasts of winter. The raven and the philomel have joined in a hoarse melancholy concert, and are doing dolorous music the wide world round. There is no fragrance in the roses ; the lily and the violet have no beauty for me Is not the world a vast churchyard in which nought but emblems of death are to be seen?—Alas ! in what a gloomy and awful scene hast Thou left me, O my Father ! Hast Thou at once forsaken this refractory child—this iniquitous wretch ; Asolute Holiness ! hast Thou completely removed Thyself from this corrupt sinner, and left him to be burnt in inextinguishable hell-fire ? O merciful God, where hast Thou gone to ? Thy child is penitent : wilt Thou not listen to his lamentations ? Already is he weighed down with sorrow : already is his heart crushed with remorse ; wilt Thou not allow him to approach Thee ? Oh, how can I live without Thee ! My Father, my bounteous Father ! without Thee this life is death to me : this world is a den of suffering and despair. O tell me, Father, where Thou art, that I may see Thy loving and benignant countenance, and pacify my harassed heart. There is none to console me, Lord, none to bring peace to me. My lot is unbearable. Be not far

from me now, my God. O my Father, hasten to my relief and save my bleeding heart,—Is there no help for me ?—" Fate drop the curtain " I can bear no more.

A truce to lamentation ! Methinks I hear a voice in the depths of my heart saying—" Wail not. The Father hath not forsaken you. He forsaketh none of His children not even the most refractory and wayward. He is ever your's—your constant Companion, your everlasting Friend.—Behold His hands already outstretched to lift you from the pool of remorse and despair, and wipe away the tears of your eyes. Behold the light of His face is dispelling the gloom of your heart. Say not, He is distant from you. Of all things is He ever the nearest to your soul. Open then your eyes, penitent sinner ! and see His holy and amiable face. Sorrow shall be no more : suffering shall be at an end." O animating and soothing voice !—My Father has not forsaken me ! He is still with me ! In the blackened heart of this hardened sinner the All-Holy still abides ! —What a celestial light now dawns upon my soul, and brightens and enlivens its whole horizon. How beautifully the whole scene clears up. Every thing has a halo of celestial glory around it. Now each movement of the air stirs up joy and hope : each up-springing lark gives wings to my aspirations : each flowing brook sets my soul a-going : each tuneful bird pours forth the sweets of holy hymns. Trees and mountains are glorifying my Father's majesty : the vernal freshness of the variegated flowers is revealing His beauty. " Every violet blooms of God, each lily is fragrant with the presence of Deity." Everywhere I turn my eyes I see my Father. I open my eyes, and I see His glory : I close my eyes, and I see Him still. I ask the tree where my Father is, and the mountain where my Father is : the tree and

the mountain show Him to me. I ask my soul where my Father is : my soul reveals Him to me —Is this a treacherous dream I am indulging in ? Is not this a pleasant fancy, a charming reverie, too pleasant and charming to be true ?—How can that be ? Is not my Father before my eyes ? Am I not reposing on Him ? Is not my whole nature quickened by His sacred presence ? Is He not within me as the Life of my life ? Indeed, nothing can be more perceptible, nothing more tangible. Oh ! the world is lull of Him. His spirit breathes everywhere, and animates every object.—How cheerful is the aspect of human society ! A common family—a blessed brotherhood ! A holy relationship binds all men : we are all children of the same Father. The world is thus our home—our dear home—the abode of domestic joys, and sympathies, and hopes.—O what a beautiful scene is opened around and within me ! It is the ineffable glory of my Father's face that has thus brightened and sweetened all things—Infinite is His mercy : immeasurable His goodness. O how exuberant is His indulgence to sinners ! Far from abhorrently spurning away a loathsome wretch like myself, He has with undiminished love all along kept me in His company. Though blasphemed, reviled, scoffed at, and disobeyed, He has never forsaken me. His fatherly affection has suffered no diminution. His rains and dews, his sun and moon have always continued to serve me : He hath given me food to eat, and water to drink.

Fellow-sinners ! contemplate for one moment His boundless mercy : think of His fatherly providence towards you. Though inebriated with the pleasure of the flesh you are rioting in the extravagancies of ungodliness, and sacrificing your spiritual interests for the bubbles of this world ; though with steeled hearts you are repelling your Father's claims upon

your affection and obedience, and running headlong in an unfilial and ungrateful life, remember that He is still with you,—ready to take you back if you want Him. Daily and hourly does He walk about our streets, exhorting His children to follow Him. To the palace and the hut, the mechanic's work-shop and the scholar's closet, the husbandman's field and the capitalist's banking-house, to places of worship as well as the prodigal's table, and the libertine's hall of pleasure He goeth. He goeth to the solitary thinker and the plodding man of business. He visiteth the wealthy and the penurious, the happy and the distressed. Every place He frequenteth: at the doors of every family He standeth, to preach His cause and rouse up His children to purity and faith. But man, ungrateful man, will not give Him a hearing. He repeats His exhortations hour after hour, moment after moment saying,—“Do give Me a place in your hearts. My beloved children”; but with inveterate obstinacy they persevere in their own way: they will not unbar the gates of their hearts. Neither His affectionate words nor His benign looks can soften their adamant hearts. Brethren, imagine for one moment how anxious is our Father for our salvation; how warmly He loves us, how earnestly He seeks our love. He stands with us at all times, in all places, and under all circumstances, seeking only an opportunity, to enter our hearts. Offer that opportunity, dear brethren, and welcome your Father. He is our all,—Creator, Father, Guide, and Saviour—our hope and our joy—Life of our life, our Supreme Friend and our Best Companion for ever. Do not any longer treat him with disrespect or neglect! Keep not your affectionate Father waiting at the door any longer. Do not lose one golden moment of life, I beseech you. How slippery is our position; in this world—none knows when death shall close our

career. Come then forthwith, dear brethren, and embrace your Father with all your heart and soul. The hungry shall be fed, the weak shall be made strong, the ignorant knowing, the poor rich with treasure priceless ; every one shall be cooled under the shade of His mercy. Dear brethren, approach your loving Father and consecrate your heart and soul to Him—There is none like unto Him : there is none like unto Him, brethren.

Affectionate Father ; Infinite is Thy mercy. The length and breadth of Thy loving-kindness who can measure ?—Immersed in the filth of worldliness I lay—an unfortunate and helpless wretch. There was none to protect me or mitigate my sufferings, Rest and peace I lost ; no enjoyment was there for me ; remorse ate into the depths of my heart, till I was mad with despair. But Thy blessing hand Thou didst outstretch, and deliver me from my death-like state.—I saw Thy face, Thy amiable face, and my sufferings like clouds passed away from my mind. By Thy boundless grace, Merciful Lord, new life has come upon me, my soul has been clad in new energies and sentiments. O Thou comforter of the distressed, Thou hope of the dejected, O Thou saviour of sinners, at Thy holy feet I fall prostrate, and consecrate my whole soul unto Thee. May Thy face be for ever before my mind's eye—May I never forsake Thee, dear Lord ; and may all my thoughts, and feelings, and actions in blessed harmony flow unto Thee. Grant me strength that I may live for ever, Thy obedient servant, and Thy dutiful child.

Sing the glories of the GOD OF MY SALVATION, ye nations of the world : Heaven and Earth, chant His dear name for ever and ever. Let the East and the West, the North and the South be filled with sweet hosannas unto my Father. May the rich and the poor, the wise and the simple, the powerful and the

weak, the young and the old joyfully praise the Supreme God—Him whose kind providence for evermore watcheth over the interests of all. May He be dear to every individual, every family, and every community. Lord, when shall all Thy children worship and love Thee ?

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

No. 6.]

[November, 1860.

THE following extracts constitute some of the evidences which clearly prove that, thanks to the progress of intelligence and free inquiry, the emancipation of the mind from the yoke of books and churches has been effected in many quarters of Christendom. The independent spirit of the age will not brook the prostration of the soul beneath any other authority except that of God : nor will it, in its onward march, halt at the peremptory bidding of orthodoxy,—“ Thus far only shalt thou go.” Freedom and Progress are the watchwords of the 19th century. It is likewise beginning to be felt that true faith does not consist in an intellectual assent to historical events, but in earnest and steady reliance upon the ever-living, ever-present Deity ; and that salvation far from depending upon any literary capacity of wading through thousand folios of academic divinity, comparing passages, expounding texts, weighing evidences, and solving complicated problems of metaphysics, history, geography, ethnology, criticism, &c., is nothing more than the regeneration of the soul by thorough resignation to the justice and mercy of the God of Salvation. Many an earnest soul is strenuously protesting against the worship of the “ dead letter”—antiquated symbols, and lifeless dogmas, and vindicating the living revelations of the spirit within—those supreme pandects of Intuitive Religion which are engraven on the tablets of the soul. A strong yearning after the Living and Spiritual

is thus clearly manifest. Nor, again, does the controversial and jealous spirit of sectarian dogmatism fall in with the catholic views of the age. History has portrayed in frightful colours the mischievous effects of sectarianism, and has fully proved that *opinion* cannot serve as the bond of religious confraternity—that what is local, contingent, and specific, cannot constitute the basis of a church. Such a church as stands upon what is above time and place—upon the catholic principles of Faith and Love, such a church as shall establish the brotherhood of Man, many are looking forward to with eager expectations. In view, the signs of the times display a manifest tendency to what is Progressive, Living, Spiritual and Catholic and fully sanction the hope that the “Church of the Future” will be Theism—the Supreme Heaven-born Brahmoism ! It is a pleasure to behold such prognostications. Stout-hearted seekers and lovers of truth ! with unflinching faith and enthusiasm endeavour to promote the spiritual emancipation of humanity, and pave the way for the advent of the True Church.

“ Already is it seen that the true advancement of theology does not depend so much upon any local or purely inductive processes applied to the Scriptural data as upon the clearing of our religious intuitions, and the higher development of our whole religious consciousness. Thus as a higher and more spiritual philosophy advances, the arena of theological researches will be removed more and more from the region of these mere mechanical and inductive principles, and the main efforts of theologians be directed to the development of those lofty spiritual intuitions, in which Christianity, as a religion, essentially consists, and by the light of which alone we can interpret the language either of nature or revelation.

We affirm it therefore as an expectation which, if there be any truth in the significance of the past, must *inevitably* be realized : that the scattered and disjointed elements of Protestantism, those pulverized fragments of our religious life which have been isolated by the asserted supremacy of the individual judgment and the all-sufficiency of logical processes must ere long seek for a new and a higher unity in the intuitional consciousness."—" *Philosophy of Religion*" by F. D. Morell.

"The reason why many have been so anxious to represent the letter of the Bible as inspired is that there may be a *fixed standard* for truth in the world. They do not consider that the letter can never serve as a standard for the *Spirit* of Christianity—that the two are altogether incommensurable—that the letter *alone*, in fact, never has secured unity in the church—but the unity we so much yearn after comes only through the development of the religious *life*. This being the case, where is the value of reasonableness of laying so great a stress upon the letter when after all we *must* be brought, on any hypothesis, to one and the same conclusion, namely, that the spirit of Truth interpreted by Divine aid and perceived through the awakened religious consciousness of true believers is the real and essential revelation—the sole basis of Christian unity—the appeal to which we all in the end practically repair? Whether the words be dictated or not, there is therefore exactly the same necessity for another and spiritual appeal, which is in fact nothing but affirming in the spirit of our whole previous analysis that as all revelation must be made to the intuitional faculty, mere material and logical appliances, whether in the form of writing or speaking, can only avail as *means* towards the realization of the great end implied in the idea of *a revelation from God*."—*Ibid.*

"Would that the whole idea of inspiration were thus brought as a moral power to bear upon the progress of the Christian Church, would that the unity of the Church were placed, not in the deadness of the letter, but in the higher realization of the spirit of the truth. Then at length should we see the dawn of a brighter day when the essence would be placed before the symbol—the living before the dead—and when the Gospel would come to us, not in *word* only, but in demonstration of the Spirit and in power."—*Ibid.*

"Why should we be perpetually craving after a stiff, literal, verbal infallibility? Christianity consists not in propositions—it is a life in the soul; its laws and precepts are not engraven on stone, they can only be engraven on the fleshy tables of the heart."—*Ibid.*

"Why are we still seeking the law of God in the "letter" of Jewish books, when the "Spirit" of these very books refers us to our own Heart as the tablet of the Almighty? Why do we go on with endless and fruitless quotation of obsolete "texts" to justify our postponement of Justice, Mercy and Faith to trivial questions of circumstantial belief and ceremonial practice? If it were not matter of actual experience it would sound incredible that men, women and children of all classes should in this Age and Country, be summoned to read, mark, and learn, with prostration of soul, the oriental imaginings of Arab Historians and Poets, who lived and died some thousands of years since. It seems an infatuation almost surpassing example, that Civilized Christians of the nineteenth century should be called upon to listen with awe to the wild traditions of a remote Syrian tribe, celebrating the triumphs of their furious, jealous and fickle "God of Hosts" and "God of Battles." Yet week after week, year after year, we go on ignoring the religious

light of our own land and our own times in favour of the patriarchal haziness that obscured the land of Canaan in the days of Abraham and Moses, Joshua and Samson, David and Ezra. Our "Sabbaths," our "solemn meetings," our "appointed feasts," are still set apart to instruction, setting forth how the Sun and Moon stood still to countenance the slaughter of men by men ; how the noon-tide shadow went back ten degrees to comfort a King ; how the Ass opened her mouth in articulate talk with the Prophet ; how city walls fell prostrate at the trumpet's blast, and how an iron axe floated at the good man's call."—*Catholicity, Spiritual and Intellectual, by T. Wilson.*

"Man is indeed a "Holy Bible" of his God, close-written with "the inspiration of the Almighty that giveth him understanding." Not a human work of pen and ink embodied in paper and paste, but a divine *afflatus* of mind and soul incarnate in the noblest form of flesh and blood. Every generation of Man is, or ought to be, a new and improved edition of the Holiest Bible extant in this terrestrial Planet ; the fault is our own if we reprint servile copies of the same type."—*Ibid.*

"As Protestants we must cherish the Bible, but not worship it ; the Soul must do with it as with the net to which the Kingdom of Heaven is likened in the Gospel,—must choose the good, cast away the bad, and neglect the indifferent ; for like the net, the Bible has gathered of every kind."—*Ibid.*

"The Church of the future will be the reflection of the spiritual condition of the world of *to-day*, and not the lifeless image of a by-gone age. Christians will not, much longer, dispute whether they shall adopt the language of the Nicene age, or of the Protestant Reformation—of the Tractarian or Tridentine theology, in their confessions or liturgies. The mind of the 19th century has a growing tendency to a

reliance rather upon "*insight*" than upon "*tradition*," and the memories of the past, and will have its own appropriate expression in religious faith, as well as in philosophy and science. It is as little disposed to borrow its theology from Athanasius or from Cranmer, as it is to adopt the philosophy of Aristotle, or the science of Archimedes, in exclusion of the higher insight of Bacon or of Locke—of Newton—of Humboldt—of Leverrier, or of Berzelius. The revelations of God to man will not be looked for, alone, in the plains of Palestine—in the valley of the Jordan, or in the land of Goshen ; nor will they, any longer, be considered as exclusively confined to the writings of Jewish prophets, or Christian evangelists. It has been said, that to seek our divinity in books is "to seek the living amongst the dead," and to confine the spiritual bounty of God to primitive and barbarous ages, is virtually to deny those attributes of perpetual and omnipresent justice and mercy with which every rational creed has hitherto invested Him."—*Popular Christianity by F. F. Foxton*

"From the present condition of the Church, which I have attempted to describe, we may, I think, fairly infer that a vital and organic change in her system, and not merely a superficial adaptation of her teaching to the spirit of the age, is imminent and certain, and that a reformation, far more extensive than has hitherto embellished her history, inevitably awaits her. Her "whole head is sick," her "whole heart is faint." Even in the multitude of her counsellors there is no "strength," but rather confusion, vacillation and dismay."—*Ibid.*

"The apparent excitement in our Churches, so triumphantly appealed to as evidence of the revival of the popular creed, is the first rising of the tempest that is destined to overwhelm it. The zeal of the age is for knowledge and for truth ; and, though it

may for a moment pass into the dead forms of the old superstition, it will soon outgrow its narrow tenement. The world is about to complete the triumph of toleration by declaring that man shall no longer legislate for man in the concerns of his soul."—*Ibid.*

"The faith, then, that "justifies" is not faith in human events long passed away, but in Divine instincts still throbbing in the human breast—faith, in that fair idea of perfection that the Spirit of God reveals to us in our highest and purest moments."—*Ibid.*

"The faith that depends on historical knowledge belongs, exclusively, to those whose business or pleasure may lead them to this literary banquet—a coarser and homelier, and, perhaps, a healthier diet must be found for those who have neither the taste, leisure nor the learning, to leaven their spiritual concerns with the luxuries of an elegant literature."—*Ibid.*

"If Christ were a man, he is our *pattern*; 'the possibility of our race made real.' If he were God—a partaker of God's nature, as the orthodox maintain—then they are guilty of a cruel mockery in speaking of him as a type, a model of human excellence. How can one endowed with the perfections of a god be an example to beings encumbered with the weaknesses of humanity? Adieu, then, to Jesus as anything but a Propounder of doctrines, an Utterer of precepts!"—*Creed of Christendom by R. W. Greg.*

"Miracles, we say, are not, and never can be, a sure foundation for revealed religion—an historic creed. A true Revelation addressed to all mankind, and destined for all ages, must be attested by evidence adequate and accessible to all men and to all ages. It must carry with it its own permanent and unfading credentials."—*Ibid.*

"Strange conformation of mind! which can find

no adequate foundation for its hope, its worship, its principles of action, in the far stretching universe, in the glorious firmament, in the deep, full soul, bursting with unutterable thoughts—yet can rest all, with a trusting simplicity approaching the sublime, on what a book relates of the sayings and doings of a man who lived eighteen centuries ago !”—*Ibid.*

“ There is, be the cause what it may, a total alienation between the British Churches and the British people. The same may be said of the other European countries already noticed. In France, in Germany, in Italy, and in England, the cry is, the Church is not the Church of the people.”—*Religious Scepticism by F. Langford.*

“ The constant assertion that if we reject a part, we must reject the whole ; that every fact is alike the direct revelation of God ; the bowing down to the letter which killeth, with an utter forgetfulness of the spirit, which alone giveth life ; the repeated charge that we have only to believe and not to question ; the daily making of truth itself a heresy ; in a word, Bibliolatry in all its phases has done, and is still doing, vital injury to the cause of a daily, earnest, and vital religious life manifesting itself amongst us.”—*Ibid.*

“ Each party claiming to draw its belief, its forms, and its doctrines from the Bible ; each drawing texts therefrom to establish its own peculiar tenets ; has converted the life-inspiring Book into a divinity too sacred to be touched ; or a dusty assemblage of texts for supporting its views and establishing its own creed. The practical results of such proceedings have been most disastrous. Nothing is now more common than the exclamation, ‘ You can prove any thing from the Bible ! ’ ”—*Ibid.*

“ The mistake which sectarianism has committed of making opinion the standard of piety has been

most fatal. Every nonconformist has set up an orthodoxy the departure from which is deemed damnation ; and while the dissentients are quarreling over the disputed point, thousands go down to death, uninfluenced by the genial and soul-preserving spirit of religion."—*Ibid.*

"We know of no sight so sad, as the condition of the religious world in England at the present time."—*Ibid.*

"However various the revelations we may receive from without, and whether we recognize among those revelations certain sacred books, we should yet feel that the highest and most beautiful revelation is that which is within ; that the Individual is to himself the great revelation by which all other revelations must be tested."—*Elements of Individualism by W. Maccall.*

"I believe that the Past should be regarded as the Preparation of the Present and the guide of the Future ; but not, in any respect, as a perfect model either for the Present or the Future.—*Ibid.*

"It is a mistake, however, for the unsectarian mind to suppose that from taking an unsectarian position, isolation would be an inevitable result. In quitting special connection with a particular sect or a particular party, in order to assume its individuality again, it would find that it had only brought itself into fraternal contact with all sects and all parties, specially with those in all sects and parties with whom it would most willingly fraternize. It would find that it had only widened association instead of cutting itself off from all association. It would also discover a still more comprehensive, a still nobler association than this, if once it seized the courage to burst away from sectarian bondage,—community with the brotherhood of Truth throughout the world, with the poets, with the philosophers, with the philanthropists, who in all lands are working for no other

object than the happiness and enlightenment of man, and who obey no other inspiration than that of making the Universe, material and spiritual, a more glad and glorious revelation to the human intelligence.”—*Ibid.*

“ Be it ours, my friends, to do what so few have the light and the courage to do, to be alike unsectarian in our religious and political attitude and utterances ; to labour with the good of all sects and of all parties for common objects of social emancipation ; and doubt not that thousands and thousands, even in bigoted England, will be induced to follow an example so sublime, and to work in the same noble spirit that we work for the elevation and regeneration of our race.”—*Ibid.*

“ If the views which have been advanced are sound it is plain that there is a Religion of Humanity,—a religion which belongs to human nature ; which is not the religion of the Western world or of the Eastern world, or exclusively perhaps of this world at all ; but it may be of all worlds,—a religion which does not descend to have an earthly metropolis, whether it be Rome, Jerusalem or Mecca,—a religion which is not bound up within the covers of a book, be it the Vedas, the Koran, or the Bible,—a religion which is not the property of the white race or of the black race ; not the religion of Europe or of Hindustan, of Greece or of Persia, of Palestine or of Egypt,—a religion which existed before Moses reformed that of Egypt and as existed since Luther reformed that of Europe,—a religion which is not subordinated to the influences of climate ; which does not rise or disappear with the attainment by mankind of a different stage,—a more advanced stage of civilization ; which is the same permanently ; continues as human nature continues ; which is to be found wherever man is found ; common as sense and reason, thought and feeling, mind and heart ; and which as it refers itself back to the earliest

ages of history, so will not grow dim with age, nor fade in years through the coming generations."—*Religious Ideas by Fox.*

"I shall not now pause to expose the vulgar fallacy of confounding faith with that intellectual process, that "conjunction of ideas" which constitutes belief in an historical fact * * Happily so strong a reaction is taking place even in the bosom of the Protestant Churches against this absurd error, that it may be hoped it will ere long be exploded. The kernel of truth of which it appears to be the utterly worthless shell is doubtless this:—that the acceptance with heart and head of the doctrine of the "GOODNESS OF GOD" (set forth in the teaching and life of Christ, *or in any other way*) is the SALVATION of the soul."—*Intuitive Morals, Part II.*

"The more we *know* the less we shall *believe* in a traditional miraculous relation. The *better* we are, the less we shall *need* to believe in one."—*Ibid.*

Man is greater than the Bible. That is one ray out of the sun—one drop from the infinite ocean. The inward Christ, which alone abideth forever, has much to say which the Bible never told, though it may imply the whole. The Bible is made for man, not man for the Bible. Its truths are as old as the creation, repeated more or less purely in every tongue. Let its errors and absurdities no longer be forced on the pious mind, but perish for ever: let the word of God come through Conscience, Reason, and holy Feeling, as light through the windows of morning. Worship with no master but God, no creed but Truth, no service but Love, and we have nothing to fear."—*Discourse of Religion by T. Parker.*

"To set up other men's inspiration as our law, is to disown that teaching of God, to which alone they owed their eminence. Christians were certain to degenerate, the moment they began to worship

apostles, books and church-rules and precedent and tradition, and thus to sip at other men's buckets, instead of drawing living water from the true fountain, God himself"—*The Soul by F. W. Newman.*

"For to the life of God neither belief in miracles availeth anything, nor unbelief; but a new Creation; and Faith that worketh by Love: and as many as walk after THIS RULE, peace shall be upon them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."—*Ibid*

"If no single life time, devoted only to this, could overtake all, or nearly all, that is included in the external evidences of revelation, and if unless *all* be overtaken, there can be no legitimate rest to the understanding, in this species of proof, is it conceivable, is it possible, that the Most High should send a message to his creatures which could be satisfactorily authenticated in no other way than this? It is impossible. It is contrary to all reason, to all probability. One might venture to affirm, without exaggeration, that if rational faith be of the nature supposed, there is not a rational believer in revelation, in existence at this moment. There never has been a rational believer in revelation, not one individual in any age, who has so thoroughly, so exhaustively gone over the whole of the external proofs, as to be able to say with truth, "There is not a corner, which I have not explored, not a spot, in which some seemingly decisive, fact against the authority of Scripture might be, which I have not narrowly scanned." The thing is literally, physically, impossible. * * * Talk of Hebrew, Greek, Chaldaic, Syriac, and other languages of ancient codices, ancient versions, of historical, scientific, philosophical, critical, hermeneutical researches and studies, of prophecies and miracles and inspiration, and the kinds of investigation belonging to them! What do, what can the myriads of good Christian people know

about any of these things ? Nothing, absolutely nothing."—*Province of Reason* by J. Young.

"Read within !" is the audible command of his own mind, to every human being—"within !" Go down to the deep place of intuitions, which own no earthly fountain ! Search, Look, Gaze, Try to detect and decipher the mysterious writing on the primitive tablets of the soul, which no created hand has traced ! Listen, also ! in that profoundest sacredest adytum—away, from all outer sounds, which derange and dull the organ of hearing, writ for the faintest whisperings of the holy oracle ! Look and Listen, Wait and Gaze long, patiently, painfully ! The oracle *will* utter itself, the hidden holy writing *will* shine out, and some divine letters, words, sentences *will* become legible to the eye !"—*Ibid.*

-

AN EXHORTATION.

No. 7.]

[December, 1860.

IT is indeed painful to see man, that "beauty of the world, that paragon of animals," dissipate his life in extravagant follies and sensualities, regardless as of the pre-eminent position which he occupies in creation, as of the sacred mission which he has to fulfil here below. Does it not awaken pity and regret to see him smother those godlike attributes of reason, judgment, and conscience wherewith he has been so nobly endowed, and under the cravings of tyrant appetites, pursue a course of reckless indulgences, like wolves and leopards of the wilderness? Alas! man, what an enormous swerving from thy destiny—what a profound ignorance of what thou art and why thou livest! Is it thy glory, with arrogated independence, to disavow thy allegiance to thy Maker, and bid defiance to His commandments? Hast thou deserted all that is noble and sacred to idolize the evanescent pleasures of the flesh and prostrate thyself in the service of earth-born impurities? Luxuriating in debaucheries, art thou oblivious of thy moral and spiritual interests, and blind to the immense world which stretches forth in awful majesty beyond the skirts of death? Has the impious conviction found a lodgment in thy mind that a smooth course of carnal gratification is the be-all and end-all of human existence, and that no solemn reckoning awaits him who wages rebellious war against the King of kings? Where is thy boasted judgment when thou dost prefer the poisoned chalice

of wickedness to the nectarful bowl of virtue—the momentary freaks of earthly joy to the immortal glory of the life to come—the ignoble servitude of lowly passions to the high-aspiring obeisance to the throne of heaven :—where thy reason, where the ostensible distinction between thee and the brutes? Has impiety so hardened thy soul as to render it proof against the earnest exhortations with which all objects hourly call thee to rectitude and God? Dost thou not know that the magnificent things which thou so industriously and manfully pursuest, and the pleasures which thou dost incessantly court with all the fervour of love shall “fall like Lucifer never to hope again,” that the gaities of sin lift thee to ecstatic raptures but to hurl thee down to the deep recesses of remorse and self-condemnation—and that a day shall come when all that thou callest thy own shall leave thee and betray thee to the hands of relentless death? How fickle is fortune; how breath-like pomp, glory, and all pleasures of the nether world! Alas! how soon are the sunny days of life engloomed by the dark clouds of penury; how soon are the halls of festivity and mirth converted into scenes of woe, and loud bursts of laughter into cries of lamentation and despair: how often are the warmest longings of the heart frustrated, the most cherished hopes blighted, the pleasantest possessions wrung away, and the liveliest joys embittered! Alas! How often do the icy hands of death rend asunder the sweetest ties of domestic love and the dearest connection of friendship. Boast not, man, of the felicities and honours of the world: they are as the dream that soon passeth away, the flower that blossoms to-day but fades on the morrow,—this moment they glitter, in the next, lo! they disappear, and leave nought but heaviness, vexation, and despair. List, list, each atom in Nature’s vast works cries, “all is vanity”.

Art thou, too, engulfed in odious ingratitude ? He who feeds thee, and makes His air and waters minister to thy comforts—whose sun and moon shine on thee—whose flowers breathe ambrosial odours into thy nostrils—and whose fruits fetch delicious flavour to thee, shall He not meet with a grateful response from thy soul ? Art thou to remain oblivious of Him who with more than a father's love provides thee with food and garment, and the manifold joys which thou dost enjoy, whose everlasting arms always uphold and protect thee, and whose loving-kindness unto thee continues unabated even when thou dost despise and forsake Him ? Ingratitude to Him who is at once the Creator, and Preserver, the Supreme Benefactor, and the Everlasting Friend, the Fountain-head of those blessings which meet us in exuberance wherever we turn, what can palliate, what can excuse ? When each object testifies His supreme goodness, and all nature sings million-voiced the glories of His providence, can irreligion abide by any plea or excuse, or harbour itself amid the important (?) concerns and cares of this world to escape the brand of a most abominable ingratitude ?

Nay, art thou not aware that an awful government hangs over thee enjoining most solemn and high injunctions for thine observance, and holding forth appropriate recompense for vice and virtue ? Instinct with a power which never fails to approve of what is right, and disapprove of what is wrong, and which with dictatorial authority commands the performance of the former, and prohibits the commission of the latter, art thou not every moment warned as to what thou oughtest to do ? Is there not always within thee a conscience which firmly upholds the law of God, and ever cries, Beware ? But if regardless of its constant remonstrances thou dost uninterruptedly riot in licentiousness, think not that thou hast escaped

the awful penalties of thine iniquity. No. Nothing can change the course of divine justice : firm and unalterable are its decrees. Rest sure, that though for a season the gale of prosperity might blow on the face of wickedness, and luxuries and enjoyments ward off inquietudes from a guilty soul, yet a day shall come when the ambushed thunders of Heaven's justice shall light on thee. Canst thou not imagine that solemn and awful hour when on death-bed thou shalt cast a retrospective glance at thy past life, and Memory shall wake up from the burial-places of the mind a formidable host of wicked intents and sacrilegious deeds whose very sight shall overpower thy reflection, and aggravate, in a ten-fold degree, the horrors of thy fatal day : nay, when Anticipation, as free, shall present unto thee the prefiguration of a scene full of terrible punishments and excruciating inflictions ? Imagine that awful hour when the past and the future shall thus conspire to lash and harrow thy soul and say, do the promptings of self-love dispose thee to be a voluntary victim of so painful and miserable a lot.

What motive then, O man, can urge thee to forsake thy God ? What is it that doth so prostrate and infatuate thy soul as to render thee oblivious of thy best interests ? What unaccountable consideration induces thee to forego the pursuit of that wealth, that bliss, that honor which perisheth not, and surrender thyself to the hands of those phantoms of delight, those charming temptations of the flesh which bewitch only to beguile, and lure only to destroy ? What is there in sublunary things that can so stupify thy mind as to make thee energetic and resolute in bringing about thine own destruction ? When so many exhortations are ever and anon calling thee to thy duties, when so many lights are showing thee the true path, when conscience and reason, and even

self-love and thine own daily experiences are pointing out thy great destiny, why dost thou, O man, thus paralyze thy best energies, debase thy best feelings, and yield thy heart and soul, mind and body to the service of the world ?

Alas ! man, thy, life decries thy dignity, and shows thyself unworthy of thy illustrious Parentage if, unmindful of the dictates of judgment and reason, indifferent to the hourly solicitations of nature, ungrateful to the Bounteous Creator and regardless of the terrors of moral retribution thou hast chosen to forsake the path of rectitude—a scene where the star of grace shines in serene rays, and contentment's cherub, aye, wafts sweet breeze to the devout heart—to grovel on the filthy platform of iniquities. And thus dost thou stand now—thy glories shorn off, thy helmet of dignity robbed, and thy adorable figure reduced to a puny, unsightly thing, scarce to be distinguished from the unsentient objects of earth—a wretched despicable voluptuary, domineered over by mere extraneous circumstances, and carried adrift along the tide of passions, without self-possession, without self-control Oh ! how long shalt thou thus slumber in inglorious repose and wallow senseless in the mire of ungodliness ? Verily, thy life was not made for so base a purpose : thine immortal soul was not destined to fall into so low a degeneracy.

Awake, then, O man, from thy lethargy, and stir thyself to the great work of thy sanctification. Endeavour, at the outset, to cleanse and purify thyself by the waters of penitence and remorse, and prayerfully look up to Him who helpeth the weak and giveth light unto the blind. Away from the disastrous billows of worldliness, seek the peaceful harbour of God's truth. Beware, the world is full of vanities, the world is full of temptations. With wariness and deliberation, therefore, conduct thyself in the various walks of life, and

see that in thy thoughts and words and actions thou art neither deluded by vanities nor enticed by temptations. Confine thy gaze no longer within the pales of the present moment, but with angel's ken view the distant regions of eternity. Let heaven-born anticipations regulate all thine actions and thoughts. Be it thy perpetual ambition to fulfil the ordinances of God with unfaltering assiduity and enthusiasm, and to attain to that eternal bliss which He has fixed as the reward of virtue. Be it thy highest glory to subjugate the fierce passions of the soul, and to secure a triumphant entry into the domain of godliness and rectitude. So shall divine light irradiate the soul of mortal man ; and so the world itself now the hot-bed of sin and misery, shall become the garden of virtue and felicity : and all shall be peace and hilarity, bliss and harmony. Behold the scene clarifies, the landscape of human society brightens with gayer and livelier hues—the strife of passions is o'er—avarice and ambition, lust and intemperance sneak into their merited shade—harmony, with wide-extended wings, broods over the earth—contentment sits in every beast, and virtue reigns supreme,—and man rises in the love and favour of his Father. So “paradise is opened in the wild.”

In the momentous work of thy spiritual reformation, make no ignominious delay. The demon of death follows thy heels, and shall smite thee perchance in the blossom of wickedness. Up, up, then, degraded soul, from the filthy den of worldliness where thou hast chosen an accursed lodgment, and turn to thy Maker, thy Preserver, and thy friend.

Farewell ! Seducing vice. Farewell ! Fatal ungodliness. Hail ! Virtue, Peace, and Salvation.

TESTIMONIES TO THE VALIDITY OF INTUITIONS.

PART I.

No 8]

[January, 1861.

EVEN in this age when philosophy after numerous "schismatic aberrations" is establishing itself upon the indestructible beliefs of spontaneous consciousness, and the necessity of appeals to "the catholic principles of all philosophy" is being deeply felt, there seem to be in some quarters strong prejudices against the Doctrine of Intuitions. Some look upon it as an innovation in the history of philosophy—as the peculiar theory of a new school rather than a valid system supported by the consentient testimony of great thinkers. Others thoroughly ignore the intuitive or *a priori* element in human knowledge and regard it as a capricious sentimentality or at best a derivative cognition. That these prejudices are generally the result of superficial views and indicate a tacit acquiescence in the convenient system of empiricism can hardly be disputed. So powerfully has this system influenced not only psychology proper but politics, ethics, and theology, that it is no wonder that even now, though it has been exploded and superseded by better systems of philosophy, some, would still advocate its obnoxious principles and represent all our cognitions of sensible as well as supersensible truths as the educt of experience.

However, those who have deeply studied the history of philosophy must have learnt a different

lesson. Indeed, nothing is more certain than that such a principle in the mind as Intuition was discovered and admitted in the earliest ages of speculation and has since received the sanction of almost all philosophers of celebrity ; although its systematic exposition belongs to later times. It was not till the time of Reid—if we except Buffier whose writings have little philosophic weight—that a scientific attempt was made to expound the doctrine of Intuitions “or Common Sense.” Subsequently Sir Wm. Hamilton employed his remarkable force of understanding and his unsurpassed profundity of philosophical knowledge to elucidate that doctrine more fully, and gave his elaborate treatise to the world in his edition of Reid. It must be observed, however, that there have been endless differences of opinion in regard to the special name and character of intuition. Thus Dugald Stewart adhered more to the elemental character of intuitive truths, and called them “Stamina of human reason ;” the German school and Coleridge to their immediacy ; Reid and Hamilton to their catholicity and originality ; Brown to their necessity ; Cousin to their spontaneity, &c. This circumstance, however, does not in the least affect their testimony to the truth of intuition. It rather shows that so vitally important is the doctrine of original and intuitive truths to the interests of true philosophy that in some shape or other it must be upheld by all great thinkers. It is very striking that even such philosophers as Locke and Hume, whose theories are essentially opposed to it, have been betrayed into the admission of its validity. It is worthy of remark too that not only has the importance of the doctrine of intuition been recognised by modern philosophers, but it has been even acknowledged by some of them in unequivocal terms that true philosophy rests on the pedestal of intuition—its object being simply the legitimate exposition and application of

the native cognitions of the mind ; that erroneous systems of philosophy are attributable solely to departure from the doctrine of intuition ; and that philosophy in order to be valid and true has simply to return to intuitive consciousness. In short, the history of philosophy bears irrefragable testimony to the truth that the doctrine of intuition is an abiding fact amidst the ever-shifting opinions and the endless controversies of Sensationalism, Idealism, Mysticism, and Scepticism. If philosophy is the development of the normal truths of consciousness, and if the history of philosophy is the true record of the theories which have resulted from the investigation of the mind in different epochs and centuries, then certainly is this doctrine not only valid but universal and eternal, and arguments drawn from it, whether applied to our conceptions of material objects, or of the transcendental truths of morality and religion, are eminently scientific and challenge the assent of all mankind.

In illustration of the above remarks innumerable testimonies might be adduced. Some of them are here subjoined.

"Those things, however, are true and primary which obtain belief not through other things, but through themselves. For it is not requisite in scientific principles to investigate the why, but each of the principles ought to be credible, itself through itself."
—*Aristotle*.

"What appears to all that we affirm to be ; and he who rejects this belief will assuredly advance nothing better deserving of credence."—*Ibid*.

"For it is a mark of ignorance not to be able to distinguish those things which ought to be demonstrated from things of which no demonstration should be attempted. In truth it is altogether impossible that everything should be susceptible of demonstration ;

otherwise the process should extend to infinity and after all our labour nothing would be gained."—*Ibid.*

"Hence if we know and believe through certain first principles we must know and believe these themselves in a superlative degree, for the very reason that we know and believe secondary truths through them."—*Ibid.*

"These common notions, though excited in us by the objects of sense are not conveyed to us by them ; they are implanted in us by nature, so that God seems to have imparted to us not only a part, of his image, but of his wisdom. And whatever is understood and perceived by all men alike deserves to be accounted one of these notions, some of them are instinctive, others are deduced from such as are. The former are distinguishable by six marks ; priority, independence, universality, certainty, so that no man can doubt them without putting off as it were his nature, necessity, that is, usefulness for the preservation of man ; lastly, intuitive apprehension of these common notions do not require to be inferred."—*Account of Lord Herbert of Cherbury; Hallam's Lit. Of Europe.*

"In the conclusion of this treatise, Herbert lays down the five common notions of natural religion implanted, as he conceives, in the breasts of all mankind. 1. That there is a God ; 2. That he ought to be worshipped ; 3. That virtue and piety are the chief parts of worship ; 4. That we are to repent and turn from our sins ; 5. That there are rewards and punishments in another life."—*Ibid.*

"Sometimes the mind perceives the agreement or disagreement of two ideas immediately by themselves without the intervention of any other ; and this I think we may call intuitive knowledge. From this the mind is at no pains of proving or examining but perceives the truth as the eye doth light, only by being directed towards it."—*Locke's Essays.*

" This kind of knowledge is the clearest and most certain that human frailty is capable of. This part of knowledge is irresistible, and like bright sunshine, forces itself immediately to be perceived as soon as the mind turns its view that way and leaves no room for hesitation, doubt, or examination, but the mind is presently filled with the clear light of it. He that demands a greater certainty than this demands he knows not what and shows only that he has a mind to be a sceptic without being able to be so." —*Ibid.*

"From the one consideration, then, that the understanding itself is innate, though our ideas are not, he [Leibnitz] goes on to reason, that there are, both in mathematics and philosophy, necessary truths, whose certainty does not spring from experience, but which have their foundation originally in the thinking soul. These truths he regarded as the primary sources or elements of human knowledge ; so that his starting-point in philosophy was not, as with Locke, the simple unresolvable product of the understanding."—*Account of Leibnitz, Morell's History of Philosophy.*

"Leibnitz admitted innate truths, which he explains to be cognitions not actually, but only virtually, existent in the mind, anterior to experience ; by which they are occasioned, registered, exemplified, manifested but not properly caused or contributed, or their infallibility and eternal certainty demonstrated, for, as necessary to be thought, and therefore absolutely universal, they cannot be the product of sense, experience, induction ; these at best being only competent to establish the relatively general. These truths are consequently given as natural habitudes, that is, dispositions, aptitudes, preformations active and passive, which render the intellect more than a mere *tabula rasa*. Truths thus innate are manifested

in two forms ; either as *Instincts*, or as the *Light of Nature*. But both become known to us as facts of consciousness, that is, in immediate, internal experience ; and if this experience deceive us, we can have no assurance of any truth, be it one of *fact*, or be it one of *reason*. Leibnitz's *Natural Light* and *Instinct* are together, equivalent to *Common Sense*." —*Testimony of Leibnitz, Sir Wm. Hamilton's Edition of Reid's Works Note A.*

"That some moral and philosophical truths therefore are so evident in themselves that it would be easier to imagine half mankind run mad, and joined precisely in the same species of folly, than to admit anything as truth which should be advanced against such natural knowledge, fundamental reason, and common sense."—*Shaftesbury.*

"The first of those qualities [essential to first truths] is to be so clear that if we attempt to defend or attack them, it cannot be done but by propositions which manifestly are neither more clear nor more certain."—*Buffier's First Truths.*

"They are so strongly imprinted in our minds that we regulate our conduct by them notwithstanding all the speculative refinements of those who imagine contrary opinions and who even act themselves conformably, not to their own imaginary notions but to those very first truths that are universally received." —*Ibid.*

"Those who have refused the reality of moral distinctions may be ranked among the disingenuous disputants. The only way of converting an antagonist of this kind is to leave him to himself for finding that nobody keeps up the controversy with him, it is probable he will at last of himself from mere weariness come over to the side of *common sense* and reason."—*Hume's Inquiry concerning the Principles of Morals.*

" We ascribe to reason two offices or two degrees. The first is to judge of things self-evident. The second is to draw conclusions that are not self-evident from those that are. The first of these is the province and the sole province of Common Sense ; and therefore it coincides with reason in its whole extent and is only another name for one branch, or one degree of reason."—*Reid's Works*.

"One of the most important distinctions of our judgments is that some of them are intuitive, others grounded on argument."—"I hold it to be certain and even demonstrable that all knowledge got by reasoning must be built upon first principles. This is as certain, as that every house must have a foundation."—"Such original and natural judgments are therefore a part of that furniture which nature hath given to the human understanding. They are the inspiration of the Almighty no less than our notions or simple apprehensions."—Indeed the authority of this tribunal is too sacred and venerable, and has prescription too long in its favour, to be now *wisely* called in question."—*Ibid.*

"The term common sense hath in modern times been used by philosophers, both French and British to signify that power of the mind which perceives truth or commands belief not by progressive argumentation but by an instantaneous instinctive and irresistible impulse derived neither from education nor from habit but from nature ; acting independently of our will whenever its object is present according to an established law and therefore properly called *Sense* ; and acting in a similar manner upon all or at least upon a great majority of mankind and therefore properly called *Common Sense*."—*Beattie's Essay on Truth*.

" Above all we must consider that as there is a sensible intuition, an *intuition* through the *Sense*,

so there is likewise a rational *intuition* through the *Reason*. Each as a peculiar source of knowledge stands counter to the other ; and we can no more educe the latter from the former than we can educe the former from the latter. So likewise both hold a similar relation to the understanding (*Verstand*), and consequently to demonstration. Opposed to *intuition of sense* no demonstration is valid ; for all demonstration is only a reducing, a carrying back of the concept to the sensible intuition (empirical or pure), which affords its guarantee ; and this, in reference to physical science, is the first and the last, the unconditionally valid, the absolute. On the same principle, no demonstration avails in opposition to the *intuition of reason*, which affords us a knowledge of supersensible objects, that is, affords us assurance of their reality and truth."—*Jacobi*.

" We have thus a revelation of nature, which does not recommend merely, but compels all and each of us to believe, and, through belief to receive those eternal truths which are vouchsafed to man."—*Ibid*.

" This Reason, this internal eye which immediately receive the light of existence, and apprehends existences as the bodily eye the outlines and the colours of the sensuous world is an immediate *sense* which contemplates the invisible."—" These facts are for us *mental intuitions*. In as much as they give us an instantaneous clear objective perception of reality they are entitled to the name of *intuition* (*Anschauung*) ; in as much as this intuition regards the objects of the invisible world, they deserve the attribute of *mental*."—*Ancillon*.

" I should have no objection to define Reason with Jacobi and with his friend Hemsterhuis as an organ bearing the same relation to spiritual objects, the Universal, the Eternal, and the Necessary as the eye bears to material and contingent phenomena."—

“ Whatever is conscious Self-knowledge is Reason ; and in this sense it may be safely defined the organ of the supersensuous.”—“ In short the human understanding possesses two distinct organs, the outward sense, and “ the mind’s eye ” which is reason : wherever we see that phrase (the mind’s eye) in its proper sense and not as a mere synonym of the memory or the fancy. In this way we reconcile the promise of Revelation that the blessed will see God, with the declaration of St. John—God hath no one seen at any time.”—“ Thrice blessed faculty of Reason ! all other gifts, though goodly and of celestial origin, health, strength, talents, all the powers and all the means of enjoyment, seem dispensed by chance or sullen caprice—thou alone, more than even the sunshine, more than the common air, art given to all men, and to every man alike.”
—*The Friend by Coleridge.*

-

TESTIMONIES TO THE VALIDITY OF INTUITIONS.

PART II.

[No. 9.]

[March, 1861.]

"THAT the doctrine in question is not a new one nor even the language in which it has been recently stated an innovation in the received phraseology of logical Science has been shown by Dr. Reid in a collection of very interesting quotations which may be found in different parts of his Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man, more particularly in the 2nd Chapter of the 6th Essay. Nor has this doctrine been generally rejected even by those writers who in their theories have departed the farthest from the ordinary opinions of the world."—*Dugald Stewart's Elements of Philosophy.*

"To denominate therefore such laws of belief as we have now been considering, *constituent elements of human reason*, while it seems quite unexceptionable in point of technical distinctness, cannot be justly censured as the slightest deviation from our habitual forms of speech"—"They form a part of those original *stamina* of human reason, which are equally essential to all the pursuits of science and to all the active concerns of life." "*To appeal to the light of human reason from the reasonings of the schools* is surely an expression to which no good objection can be made on the score either of vagueness or novelty."—*Ibid.*

"To object to the authority of such primary

intuitive belief, would thus be to reason against reason, —to affirm and deny at the same moment—and to own that the very arguments which we urge are unworthy of being received and credited.”—*Lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind by Thomas Brown.*

“All reasoning, then, the most sceptical be it remembered, as well as the most dogmatical must proceed on some principles which are taken for granted, not because we infer them by logical deduction, for this very inference must then itself be founded on some other principle assumed without proof; but because the admission of these first principles is a necessary part of our intellectual constitution.”—*Ibid.*

“These principles of intuitive belief, so necessary for our very existence, and too important, therefore, to be left to the casual discovery of reason, are, as, it were, an internal never-ceasing voice from the Creator and Preserver of our being. The reasonings of men, admitted by some and denied by others, have over us but a feeble power, which resembles the general frailty of man himself. These internal revelations from on high, however, are omnipotent like their Author. It is impossible for us to doubt them, because to disbelieve them would be to deny what our very constitution was formed to admit. Even the Atheist himself, therefore,—if, indeed, there be one who truly rejects a Creator and Ruler of the universe,—is thus every moment in which he adapts his conduct implicitly, and without reasoning, to these directions of the wisdom that formed him, obeying with most exact subserviency, that very voice which he is professing to question or to deride.”—*Ibid.*

“The knowledge which we receive through our intellectual powers is referable to two classes, these may be distinguished by the names of acquired

knowledge, and intuitive or fundamental articles of belief.—*Abercrombie's Philosophy of the Moral Feelings.*

“ These are the principles also treated of, in a former work, under the name of First Truths. They are not like our knowledge of the other kind, the result of any process either of investigation or of reasoning ; and for the possession of them, no man either depends upon his own observation, or has recourse to that of other men. They are a part of his mental constitution arising with a feeling of absolute certainty, in every sound mind ; and while they admit of no proof by processes of reasoning, sophistical objections brought against them can be combated only by an appeal to the consciousness of every man, and to the absolute conviction which forces itself upon the whole mass of mankind.”—“ For if we do not believe them to arise, in this manner, by the spontaneous exercise of every uncorrupted mind, there are only two methods by which we can suppose them to originate ;—the one is a direct revelation from the Deity,—the other is a process of reasoning or of investigation, properly so called, analogous to that by which we acquire the knowledge of any principle in natural science. We cannot believe that they are derived entirely from revelation, because we find the belief existing where no revelation is known, and because we find the sacred writers, appealing to them as sources of conviction existing in the mental constitution of every man. There is an obvious absurdity, again, in supposing that principles which are to regulate the conduct of responsible beings, should be left to the chance of being unfolded by processes of reasoning, in which different minds may arrive at different conclusions, and in regard to which many are incapable of following out any argument at all.”—“ Spontaneity gives truth ;

reflection produces science." "Spontaneity is innocence, the golden age of thought." "Inspiration in all languages, is distinct from reflection ; it is the perception of truth ; I mean of essential and fundamental truths without the intervention of will and without mixture of personality." "For the sake of abridging and that we may have the subject in few words, I call spontaneity of reason this development of reason anterior to reflection, this power which reason has to seize at first sight upon truth, to comprehend it, and to admit it, without demanding and rendering to itself an account of it." "But beneath reflection there is still spontaneity ; when the scholar has denied the existence of God, listen to the man, interrogate him, take him unawares, and you will see that all his words envelop the idea of God, and that faith in God is without his recognition, at the bottom of his heart. The indestructible spontaneity of thought is always there which produces and sustains all essential truths."—"We do not begin with prose but with poetry, because we do not begin with reflection but with intuition and absolute affirmation."—"Everywhere under its instinctive form reason is equal to itself in all the generations of humanity and in all the individuals of which these different generations are composed." "Primitive unity not supposing any distinction admits neither of error nor of difference ; but reflection in dividing the elements of thought by considering them in the exclusion of one from the other brings error ; and in considering sometimes one, and sometimes another it produces variety of error and consequently difference. Thus man who at the foundation, and in the spontaneous flight of his intelligence, is identical with himself does not resemble himself in reflection at any two moments of his existence." "We must start from common sense and return to common sense

under pain of extravagance.”—*Victor Cousin’s History of Philosophy*.—“ We have thus seen that though the argument from common sense be an appeal to the natural convictions of mankind it is not an appeal from philosophy to blind feeling. It is only an appeal from the heretical conclusions of particular philosophies to the catholic principles of all philosophy. The prejudice which on this supposition has sometimes been excited against the argument is groundless.”—*Sir Wm. Hamilton*.

“ Nor can this assumption of the existence of some original bases of knowledge in the mind itself, be refused by any.”—“ Limiting, therefore, our consideration to the question of authority ; how it is asked, to these primary propositions—these cognitions at first hand—these fundamental facts, feelings, beliefs, certify us of their own veracity ? To this the only possible answer is—that as elements of our mental constitution—as the essential condition of our knowledge—they must by us be accepted as true. To suppose their falsehood, is to suppose that we are created capable of intelligence, in order to be made the victims of delusion ; that God is a deceiver, the root of our nature a lie.”—“ The 2nd signification of Common Sense is when it denotes the complement of those cognitions and convictions which we receive from nature, which all men therefore possess in common and by which they trust the truth of knowledge and the morality of actions. This is the meaning in which the expression is now emphatically employed in philosophy and which may be therefore called its *philosophical* signification.”—“ When rightly understood therefore no valid objection can be taken to the argument of common sense considered in itself.”—“ It now remains to consider what are the essential notes or characters by which we are enabled to distinguish our original from our

derivative convictions. These characters I think may be reduced to four ;—(1) their Incomprehensibility, (2)—their Simplicity, (3)—their Necessity and Absolute Universality, (4)—their comparative Evidence and Certainty.”—“ The doctrine of common sense notwithstanding many schismatic aberrations is the one catholic and perennial philosophy.”—“ And yet although the past history of philosophy has in a great measure been only a history of variation and error yet the cause of this variation being known we obtain a valid ground of hope for the destiny of philosophy in future. Because since philosophy has hitherto been inconsistent with itself only in being inconsistent with the dictates of our natural beliefs.”

“ For truth is catholic and Nature one ; ” it follows that philosophy has simply to return to natural consciousness to turn to unity and truth.”—*Ibid.*

“ And we would caution every reader, in the outset, against the supposition that the distinction [between the *logical* and the *intuitional* faculty which] we are about to develop somewhat at large, is anything at all novel in the history of mental philosophy. Far from that, it is almost as universal as philosophy itself, lying alike patent both in ancient and modern speculation.”—*Philosophy of Religion*, J. D. Morell.

“ Just as in all our conceptions of material things there is the *matter* which is contributed by one faculty, and the form by another, so in all the higher sciences, whether they be mathematical, moral, theological, ontological, or æsthetic, we depend entirely upon the intuitional consciousness to give us the concrete basis of them, and upon the logical consciousness to give us the scientific form.”—*Ibid.*

“ In all these instances we see that the primary elements of knowledge, the fundamental realities of

the *true*, the *beautiful* and the *good*, all alike come to us *at once* by virtue of an intellectual sensibility, which apprehends them spontaneously and intuitively just as in our perceptive consciousness we apprehend the outward reality of things around us."—*Ibid.*

"Reason up to a God and the best you can do is to hypostatize and deify the final product of your own faculties ; but admit the reality of an intellectual intuition, (as the mass of mankind virtually do) and the absolute stands before us in all its living reality."—*Ibid.*

"Now these primary elements of all the Sciences can never be communicated and never *learned* exegetically. Unless we have a direct consciousness of them, they must ever remain a deep mystery to us—just as no description could ever give to a blind man the notion of colour, or to a man who has no organ of taste the idea of bitter or salt."—*Ibid.*

"The logical consciousness is *individual*, the intuitional consciousness is *generic*."—*Ibid.*

"I am inclined to define Metaphysics as THE SCIENCE WHICH INQUIRES INTO THE ORIGINAL OR INTUITIVE CONVICTIONS OF THE MIND WITH A VIEW OF GENERALIZING AND EXPRESSING THEM AND ALSO OF DETERMINING WHAT ARE THE OBJECTS REVEALED BY THEM."—*The Intuitions of the Mind by the Rev. James M'Cosh.*

Laws of the former kind are of a higher or deeper nature ; they are the generalization of convictions carrying necessity with them and a consequent universality in their very nature. They are entitled to be regarded as in an especial sense philosophic principles, being the ground to which we come when we follow any system of truth sufficiently far down, and competent to act as a basis on which to erect a superstructure of science. They are truths of our original constitution having the sanction of Him who

hath given us our constitution and graven them there with his own finger."—*Ibid.*

"The 1st position I would lay down is that the mind must have something native or innate. A 2nd position may be maintained, that this something has rules, laws or properties. As a 3rd position it is capable of being established that the mind has original perceptions, which original perceptions may be described as intuitive. It is possible to defend a 4th position, that the mind can discover necessary and universal truth. It may be stated as a 5th position that the very acquisition of experience implies native laws or principles. A 6th position may be established, that reasoning proceeds on principles which cannot be proved by reasoning, but must be assumed and assumed as seen intuitively to be true."—*Ibid.*

"The primary mark of intuitive truth is self-evidence. Necessity is a secondary mark of intuitive truth. Catholicity may be employed as a tertiary test."—*Ibid.*

"It will be seen that our intuitive convictions, whether they relate to the true or the good, all conduct us to Him who is emphatically the True and the Good."—*Ibid.*

"Mind begins in faith, in holding for true the objective presented to it in sensible perception. Thus intuitive in its lowest energy it is equally so in its highest. If looking forward, it has no further explanation to render of the reality of the visible world than that it is present in apprehension and therefore must be conceived as existence ; so looking upward from the sphere of finite reality it perceives a higher world of truth which equally makes itself good in apprehension. Such a higher power of intuition, by which we apprehend realities beyond the region of the sensible is one. which is admitted by every

school of philosophy, save that which from the extremely unphilosophical assumption lying at its basis, is bound to ignore every thing beyond the sensible. At the same time there have been endless disputes as to the special name and character of this transcendent intuition. For our purpose it matters not at all how it may be specially designated, or even understood, so that its reality is confessed ; whether for example it be identified more with the intellectual or moral side of our being. * * * Whether therefore this loftiest energy of the soul—which relates it to a sphere of unconditioned objectivity as the lower intuitional power relates it to the sphere of the conditioned—be conceived of as intelligence in the highest sense or as faith, it is for us of no consequence. As forming the highest expression of our mental activity it seems eminently to deserve the special name of reason which has often been applied to it.”—*Theism by Professor John Tulloch.*

THE REV. S. DYSON'S QUESTIONS ON BRAHMOISM ANSWERED.

No. 10.]

[April, 1861.]

Questions Suggested on hearing a Lecture and reading a Tract No 4 of a Series, entitled, "The Basis of Brahmoism," "Brahmoism stands upon the rock of Intuition."

1. WHAT is the Brahmic doctrine with regard to consciousness? Is it a special faculty of the mind as Reid and Stewart say? Or is it *Not* a special faculty of the mind as Sir W. Hamilton Brown, Payne, Mill, Spalding, say, *i.e.*, is it a general term applicable to all the states of the mind indifferently?

2. If according to the Brahmic doctrine, consciousness is something different from intuition or "intuitional consciousness," what is the precise difference?

3. If according to the Brahmic theory, consciousness is a general term applicable to all sensations of the mind, is "intuitional consciousness" (A) a special intuitive religious faculty, or (B) certain intuitive religious truths.

4. Taking intuitional consciousness to mean an intuitive faculty, is the authority of Sir W. Hamilton or other metaphysicians appealed to in support of this view?

5. If not, what are the proofs of the existence of this universal intuitive faculty?

6. If this intuitional consciousness be a special intuitive faculty, does this faculty (a) generate, produce, originate religious truths, or (b) does it only autho-

ritatively test religious truths, *i. e.*, discriminate between religious truths and errors ?

7 If the intuitional consciousness be the faculty which originates religious truths ; (1) does the faculty naturally and of itself originate these truths ; (2) or does it depend upon external influences and education for development in order to the origination of these truths ; (3) or does it partly originate some truths, when in an undeveloped state, and partly some other truths, or these same truths more clearly in a developed state ?

8 If case (1) be the Brahmic theory, how does the Brahmo account for and explain the wide diversities and contradictions in religious matters which notoriously always have existed, and do at this day exist among all nations under heaven ?

9. If case (2) be the Brahmic theory, what are the powers and characteristics of developed and undeveloped intuitional consciousness respectively ?

10. What, according to the Brahmic theory, is the meaning of the phrase " self-evident truths" and " self-produced truths ?"

11. According to the Brahmic theory, is there any difference between " self-evident truths" and " self-produced truths ?"

12. If there be any difference, will the Brahmo state in what that difference consists ?

13. If, according to the Brahmic theory, (case 2) education be necessary to the development and working of the intuitional consciousness, does the Brahmo allow or deny that this necessary education has ever existed in countries into which the light of Christianity has never penetrated, for instance Ancien Egypt, Greece, Rome, Hindustan ?

14. If they allow that this necessary education has existed in these countries must they not also allow that the religious doctrines of these countries

must necessarily be the fundamental religious truths of Brahmoism, especially on these points ; (1) the nature and attribute of God ; (2) the rule of moral duty ; (3) a future state ?

15. If the Brahmo will not allow that the religious doctrines of the people of these countries are the fundamental intuitive truths of Brahmoism, can he state why and on what principle they are not ?

16. If they are received, will the Brahmo, on his theory, explain and account for the following difficulties ?

- 1.—The inconsistencies and contradictions in religions on these points which existed in each country above specified.
- 2.—The inconsistencies and contradictions which existed among the doctrines of the different countries on these points.
- 3.—The inconsistencies and contradictions which exist among all these doctrines of all these countries and the present Brahmic doctrine.
- 4.—The inconsistencies and contradictions, which exist among the various opinions of infidels in modern educated countries, *e. g.*, Theists, Pantheists, Atheists, all of many kinds.

17. Whatever be the Brahmic theory with regard to the intuitional consciousness, will the Brahmo state whether case (1) case (2) case (3) specify these truths thus originated.

18. Reverting to question 6 alternative (b), if the Brahmic theory be that this intuitional consciousness is not an originating faculty, but only a verifying faculty, *i. e.*, a power of discriminating between religious truths and errors, what are the boundaries, if any, and what the extent of this verifying faculty ?

19. Does the Brahmo allow or deny that there may be religious truths reaching beyond the powers and grasp of this verifying faculty ?

20. If the Brahmo allows that there may be religious truths reaching beyond its sphere and province, by what faculties and by what means does he distinguish them from those which are within the boundaries of this verifying faculty ?

21. And, as they lie beyond the sphere of this verifying faculty, will the Brahmo accept them or reject them ?

22. If he accept them, as his intuitional consciousness does not apply, on what grounds does he accept them, and if he reject them, as his intuitional consciousness does not apply, on what grounds does he reject them ?

23. Reverting to question 19, if the Brahmo deny that there may be religious truths beyond the sphere of his intuitional consciousness, it is enquired on what grounds ?

24. Is it because the intuitional consciousness of the Brahmo is omniscient and is *already* acquainted with *all religious* truths ?

25. Does the Brahmo allege that doctrines which his verifying faculty rejects are *ipso facto* proved to be erroneous ?

26. And in that case does the Brahmo assert infallibility to be an attribute of his intuitional consciousness ?

27. If the Brahmo deny that there may be religious truths beyond the sphere of his intuitional consciousness, and assert that his intuitional consciousness is the limit of religious truths, by what means will he prove the existence of his intuitional consciousness to ten men who express their doubts of their possessing it ? And if the Brahmo assert that he can prove the existence of this faculty to other people, on what principle does he deny the possibility of external revelation ?

28. And how will he prove that there may not

be religious truths beyond the boundaries of this intuitional consciousness ?

29. When the Brahmo rejects the supernatural and mysterious doctrines of the Bible such as divine inspiration, divine spiritual influence, the incarnation of Christ, is it because these doctrines are within the boundaries of this verifying faculty or without ?

30. If within, is not the Brahmo claiming for his verifying faculty divine knowledge ?

31. If without, why does the Brahmo reject what he confessedly is unable to give judgment upon ?

32. Reverting to question 3 alternative B, if his intuitional consciousness be not an intuitive faculty, but intuitive truths, and these truths exist in every man's mind, then (1) are they to be found in every country, among all nations, underlying all religions ; or (2) have they no objective existence till evoked by external influences and education, or (3) are they partly objective and partly subjective till evoked by education ?

33. If [case (1)] what are the truths which underlie all religions with regard for instance to the three points mentioned above ; (1) the nature and attributes of God ; (2) the rule of moral duty ; (3) future life ?

34. On this Brahmic theory of the universal existence of certain intuitive truths, how does the Brahmo account for and explain the wide diversities and contradictions in religious matters which notoriously always have existed and do at this day exist among all nations under heaven ?

35. If [case (2)] the Brahmic theory be the non-existence of these intuitive truths objectively, till evoked by education ; does the Brahmo allow or deny that this necessary education has ever existed in countries into which the light of Christianity has never penetrated, for instance ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome and Hindustan ?

36. If it be allowed that this necessary education has existed in these countries, must they not also allow that the religious doctrines of these countries must necessarily be the fundamental religious truths of Brahmoism ; especially on these points ; (1) the nature and attributes of God ; (2) the rule of moral duty ; (3) a future state ?

37. If the Brahmo will not allow the religious doctrines of the people of these countries to be the fundamental intuitive truths of Brahmoism can he state why, and on what principle they are not ?

38. If the Brahmo allow that the religious truths of the people of these countries are the fundamental intuitive truths of Brahmoism, will he on his theory account for and explain the following difficulties ?

1.—The inconsistencies and contradictions in religions on the points which existed in each country above specified.

2.—The inconsistencies and contradictions which existed among the religious doctrines of different countries.

3.—The inconsistencies and contradictions which exist among all these doctrines of all these countries and the present Brahmic doctrine.

4.—The inconsistencies and contradictions which exist among the various opinions of infidels in modern educated countries, *e. g.* Theists, Atheists, Pantheists, all of many kinds.

39. If case (3) question 32 be the Brahmic theory, what are the truths which originally exist in an objective form and those which derive their objective existence from education ?

40. What are the intuitive truths which altogether constitute the Brahmic system ?

41. Is the authority of Sir W. Hamilton appealed to in support of this Brahmic doctrine of intuitive truths ?

42. If not, what are the proofs of the existence of these intuitive religious truths?

43. When the Brahmo meets with religious truths in the Bible or elsewhere, does he regard them as truths because they fall in with his intuitional consciousness contemplated as a verifying faculty according to the first theory; or is it because they fall in with intuitional consciousness regarded as consisting of "intuitive truths?"

44. Does the Brahmo *allow* or *deny* that there may be religious truths outside and beyond these fundamental intuitive truths of Brahmoism?

45. If the Brahmo *deny* that there may be religious truths outside and beyond these fundamental intuitive truths, how does he clear himself of the charge of arrogating Divine Omniscience?

46. And as all other truth mathematical, scientific, &c., is *not* intuitive, on what principle is it alleged that all religious truth is intuitive?

47. But if the Brahmo *allow* that there may be religious truths outside and beyond these intuitive truths of Brahmoism, and as *truth in itself* is desirable, will the Brahmo not allow that the revelation of these admitted extra-religious truths to us by God is desirable?

48. But as on the Brahmic theory "miracles are impossible," can he show *how except by working a miracle* God *can* make a revelation of these extra-religious truths?

49. And also, as on the Brahmic theory "miracles cannot authenticate a doctrine," will the Brahmo show how except by working miracles God *can* prove to us, (1) that he has given us a revelation and (2) that such and such doctrines are the truths of that revelation?

50. However, supposing it to be possible that God could (1) give us a revelation, and (2) prove that he had given a revelation of these extra truths, the

Brahmo must either accept them or reject them, but as they are *without* the number of his intuitive truths, on what principles can the Brahmo either accept them or reject them ?

51. If all religious truths are intuitive and always have been so, how has it come to pass that three-fourths of the human race are in such a deplorably ignorant condition with regard to these very intuitive truths ?

52. If bad education be assigned as the cause, as these religious truths have been intuitive from the first, how has it come to pass that education is so universally bad ?

53. If good education be then absolutely necessary to the evoking of these intuitive truths, then, as education cannot be accomplished but by books, on what grounds does the Brahmo assert that an external revelation from God is impossible, and that God cannot accomplish even that by a book which men accomplish so well by education through books ?

54. As the members of the Brahmo Somaj, with one or two exceptions, invariably receive the *sacraments* of Hinduism (*jatakarma, annaprasan, upanayan &c.,*) themselves, and also administer them to their children, can they state on what grounds any one is to arrive at the conviction that they themselves are really disciples of Brahminism.

55. If by their own confessed practice, the Brahmo Somaj be thus put out of the number of this universal religion of Brahminism, can they state in what part of the world there is a sect, community or Church which subscribes to the doctrines of Brahminism as based on intuition ?

56. Can the Brahmo Somaj point to any part of the world, except in Christian educated countries, where there are individuals professing the doctrines of Brahminism thus based on intuition ?

57. Can the Brahmo Somaj refer to any history (which is *not an external revelation*) which treats of the rise and progress of so-called intuitional religion in any country in the world ?

58. If the Brahmo Somaj refer to any books which state the phases of faith and sorts of creeds of various individuals, how can they account for those extreme discrepancies of intuitional views on the fundamental doctrines of Brahminism which are thus brought to light ?

59. And if the Brahmo Somaj refers to these books which thus indicate these extreme discrepancies, what must the reference to these books be supposed to prove ?

60. And if the Brahmo Somaj refer to any books at all in proof or illustration of their doctrines ; as an external revelation is impossible, on what possible principle can they refer to books, and yet deny the possibility of an external revelation ?

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

1. Distinguish between intuition and consciousness.

Intuition denotes the native, presentative, involuntary, primitive, and catholic cognitions of the mind. Consciousness is a generic term applicable to all the states of the mind.

2. Is intuition a faculty or a truth ?

It signifies both.

3. Distinguish between the self-produced and self-evident truths.

Those truths are self-produced which have their *origin* in themselves : those truths are self-evident which have their *evidence* in themselves.

4. Does intuition produce religious truths, or does it only discriminate between religious truths and errors ?

Intuition *spontaneously* apprehends certain truths. The understanding *reflects* on them. The former furnishes *materials* : the latter gives *forms* to those materials, and thereby constructs science. To analyze, classify, discriminate, infer, judge, are processes of the understanding not intuition.

5. Does intuition depend upon external influence for its origination ?

The human mind depends upon external influences not for the *origination* but *awakening* of its original intuitive idea, its feelings and faculties.

6. Are there other religious truths besides the intuitive ?

Yes : truths derived from experience.

7. What are the proofs of the existence of religious intuitive truths ?

Do the Christians admit the existence of religious intuitive truths ? If so, on what grounds ? If not, what do the following expressions frequently used by distinguished Christian philosophers and theologians signify — *Law of God written in the heart, Light of conscience, Internal revelation, Never-ceasing voice of God within, God's original revelation of himself to man ?*

What is the meaning of Rom. II. 14—15 ?

“ For when the Gentiles which have not the law do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law are a law unto themselves.

“ Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another.”

If the following interpretation of this passage given by Doddridge be correct, is it not clear that Bible bears irrefragable testimony to the existence of intuitive truths ?

“ For when the Gentiles who have not the written Revelation of the divine law do, by any *Instinct of nature* and in consequence of the *untaught* dictates of their own mind, the moral duties required by the precepts of the law, these having not the benefit of an express and revealed law are nevertheless a law unto themselves. The *voice of nature* is their rule, and they are *inwardly* taught by the *constitution of their own minds* to revere it by the law of that God by whom it was formed. And they who are in this state do evidently show the work of the law in the *most important moral precepts written upon their hearts, by the same Divine Hand that engraved the decalogue upon the tables given to Moses.*”

8. Account for the diversities of religious opinions among mankind.

Account for the diversities of religious opinions among Christians.

9. Is intuition sufficient ? If so, why is education necessary ?

Is the Bible sufficient ? If so, why was Luther necessary ?

10. Is not the necessity of education an argument against the existence of intuitions ?

Is not the possibility of education an argument for the existence of intuitions ? Does education originate religious and moral ideas ? Does it not merely tend to *educate*, call forth, awaken, and develop them ? Can education give a blind man an idea of colour ?

11. If Brahmoism or intuitional religion is to be found only in Christian educated countries, is it not reasonable to conclude that it is the result of Christian education ?

Is it reasonable to conclude that that is Christian education which teaches one to deny the divinity of Christ, to protest against the infallibility of the Bible, to reject the dogmas of eternal hell and vicarious atonement, and, in short, to accept that much of Christianity which tallies with the inner revelation ?

Is it reasonable to conclude that those truths are the result of Christian education which men learn "inwardly" by an "instinct of nature and in consequence of the *untaught* dictates of their own mind ?"

12. How is it that in spite of the existence of intuitive religious truths in the mind such detestable systems of idolatry prevailed in the world ?

How is it that in spite of the Gospel such detestable sects prevailed in Christendom as the adamites, Valentinians, Gnostics, Manicheans, Agnoites, Carpocratians, Ebionites, Eclesaites, and Saturninians ?

13. Is a higher revelation than intuition desirable ?
Is a higher revelation than the Bible desirable ?

Yes, because we all "see through a glass darkly."
But as our natural capacities are limited we must

learn to be satisfied with the truths which are vouchsafed to us through them, constituting as they do the only knowable truths of salvation this side of the grave.

14. Why do the Brahmos deny the possibility of book-revelation ?

Because revelation is subjective, not objective.

15. How is it that the Brahmos refer to books and yet deny the possibility of book-revelation ?

Because they do not regard those books as book-revelations.

16. How can God authenticate a revelation of religious doctrines except by working miracles ?

Can miracles authenticate a doctrine ? Does not the following passage in the Bible clearly show that they cannot ?

“ For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets : and shall shew great signs and wonders ; in so much that if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect.”—Math. XXIV. 24.

If it be contended that miracles can only authenticate truth (*i. e.*, prove truth to be true) will the Christians state (1) how that truth can be ascertained except by intuition and (2) are not miracles wholly unnecessary if they cannot prove a doctrine to be from God ? Can the authority of Dr. Arnold be appealed to on this subject ? “ Faith, without reason,” says he, “ is not properly faith, but mere power-worship ; and power-worship may be devil-worship ; for it is reason which entertains the idea of God—an idea essentially made up of truth and goodness, no less than of power. A sign of power, exhibited to the senses might, through them, dispose the whole man to acknowledge it as divine ; yet power in itself is not divine, it may be devilish.....How can we distinguish God’s voice from the voice of evil ?.....We distinguish it, by comparing it with that idea

of God which reason *intuitively* enjoys, the *gift of reason being God's original revelation of himself to man*. Now if the *voice* which comes to us from the *unseen world* agree not with this idea, we have no choice but to pronounce it not to be God's voice ; for no signs of power, in confirmation of it, can alone prove it to be from God."

17. Are they true disciples of Brahmoism who receive the sacraments of idolatry ?

Brahmoism is opposed to idolatry of both kinds—material and spiritual. The essence of her teachings is this :—Worship neither the objects of the external world nor the passions of the heart ; but serve the One True God, and do all things unto His glory.

—

REVELATION.

No. 11.]

[May 1861.

I. You have already satisfactorily explained to me the psychological validity of the *basis* of Brahmoism both by arguments from the consciousness of man and testimonies of distinguished metaphysicians. Let us now proceed to discuss the theory of revelation, and the other *doctrines* of your creed. It is my impression, as I have already told you, that although there are certain spiritual instincts in the mind—call them intuitions, common sense, spontaneous reason, or natural beliefs, as you choose—they are insufficient to give man the light of truth, and that therefore a tangible revelation from God in the shape of a book is desirable, nay indispensable. Would you venture to deny that the wisest and best men in all ages have felt the necessity of such a revelation, and declared their natural reason inadequate to meet their spiritual wants? Is human nature infallible? Does it require no light from heaven to lead it to salvation? Are you not yourself conscious of the innumerable frailties and weaknesses of your nature? Taking these into consideration how can Brahmoism pretending to be a rational system of faith wholly discard revelation?

B. No, my friend, Brahmoism does not discard revelation. We believe that our understandings are not sufficient to give us salvation; and we acknowledge the paramount importance and necessity of a light from on high. We account revelation as the only way through which we come in contact with the saving truths of the spiritual world. The scriptures of all religions are regarded by us as rich repositories

of what is noble, pure, and saving ; and we accept the truths which are in them with profound reverence, although we do not identify them with revelation.

I. A very whimsical theory indeed ! You admit the necessity and importance of revelation, and of all scriptures—the Bible, Alcoran, and the Shastras : yet you identify none of them with revelation. Will you explain yourself fully ?

B. With the greatest pleasure. In conducting our discussion on this highly important problem of controversial theology it is necessary that we should ascertain, first of all, the essence of revelation, *i. e.* determine what it is and how it exists in the mind as a fact of our religious consciousness, and then trace it out in its diversified bearings both theoretical and practical. We shall thereby be able to divest it of those errors which sectarianism has entrusted around it, and likewise protect it, by establishing its psychological validity, from the contemptuous scoffings of the sceptical school. The first question, then, which, we have to solve in this important inquiry is—what is revelation ?

I. Precisely so. Well, what is your idea of revelation ?

B. Revelation considered in the abstract, *i. e.*, apart from the polemical opinions of sectarian creeds, denotes religious knowledge communicated by God to man. Sects differ as to the medium, place, and time of such communication ; but they agree as to its essence—the nature and the source. If this is revelation we have to inquire next whether it is *possible*, for if there be valid objections to its possibility the whole doctrine of revelation falls to the ground. However the solution of this question would by no means seem difficult if you consider it psychologically, and call to mind what I said regarding the twofold nature of our cognitive consciousness. For psychology

is the legitimate way of deciding the question : and with its aid we are enabled to affirm without any difficulty or hesitation that there are certain cognitions in the mind which are above, independent of, and anterior to our reasoning. These are the facts of intuitive consciousness ; they are native, constitutional, original truths ; they are the voice of nature in the soul, and hence they may be called the communication of God, for

“ The voice of nature is the voice of God.”

They are not the elaborations of our reflective faculties. They have not their origin in the will ; nor are they generated by impressions from the external world. Hence their source is the Deity ; for self, God, and the world, constitute the three “ ideas of reason.” “ When therefore” says Victor Cousin “ man does homage to God for the truths which he is able to refer neither to the impressions which this world gives to his senses nor to his own personality he relates them to their true source : and the absolute affirmation of truth without reflection, inspiration, enthusiasm is a veritable revelation.” From God then flows the blessed stream of intuitive truths. He is the author of intuitive revelation. Several theologians and philosophers have taken this view of intuitive or original truths of the mind, and have called them by such names as internal Revelation, Divinity in the soul, Oracle of God, Never-ceasing voice of the Creator. Such being the case, there is nothing, I trust, to prevent your acquiescing in the conclusion that revelation is possible in the intuitional consciousness.

I. I have nothing to object to in what you have said, as your observations seem to be only an application of the argument whose correctness I have already admitted. Now, proceed.

B. I will carry the argument further. I propose

to show that not only is intuition a revelation from God but it is the only possible revelation : in other words no other revelation than the intuitional is possible.

I. Do you mean to say that book-revelation is at once impossible ? Is not this a gratuitous assumption ? There is the Bible—the wonder of ages : it is a standing revelation. What do you mean by questioning its possibility at this time of the day ?

B. A book-revelation is self-contradictory and suicidal. Revelation is a state of the mind, a process of intelligence, a truth, an actual fact of consciousness. Hence a book-revelation, inasmuch as it is a book, an external object, cannot be scientifically called a revelation. Revelation is subjective not objective.

I. That is really puerile. Grant that intuitive truths communicated by God constitute true revelation. If these truths be embodied in a book, will not that book be entitled to be called a revelation to all mankind ?

B. Certainly not. Such a book can only prove that its author received revelation from God : but it is no revelation to me. That which is a revelation to you does not necessarily become a revelation to me, or to any other person. In order that it may be a revelation to me, the very same process in which you received it must be repeated in my case : in other words I must intuitively realize the same in my mind. Else that revelation would be no revelation to me. Besides a book is an appeal not to the intuition but to the understanding, It is but a field for the exercise of the intellectual powers. We do not apprehend its truths as soon as we come in contact with it. We are called upon to interpret words, phrases, sentences, evolve the latent meaning of the text, draw inferences with the aid of reasoning processes : it is only in this way that we can acquire and enjoy its truths. This

evidently holds good in the case of the so-called book-revelations, for these notwithstanding they are revelations are still books, and are therefore treated by us as such. The result is that the actual revelation to each reader is not the whole book, but the amount of truth realized by him. Is there not then something absurd in the attempts generally made to hold up certain books as standing revelations to all mankind?

I. But you don't seem to take into account the infallibility of book-revelation. Your remarks only apply to those *fallible* books which, although they are human compositions, are upheld by the superstitious, as revelations of God. But if a book be found which speaks truth, all truth, and nothing but the truth, would you not accept it as a revelation from God?

B. Not until it is actually present in our consciousness as truth, all truth, and nothing but the truth. The circumstance of infallibility, even if admitted, does not in any way bridge the gulf between the subjective and the objective. The infallible book is still outside my mind : what avails then its infallibility?

I. I see you will not readily let go your hobby of subjective and objective. However, I admit that book-revelation is not itself revelation, but only a *means* of revelation. Its object is to afford a fixed code of morality and religion, and by actually impressing it on the reader's mind help him to find truth. No body denies that it is an external thing ; but it aims to produce truth in the minds of all men—truth and nothing but the truth, so that the world may be saved from the manifold prejudices and corruptions which inevitably proceed from the unaided speculations of the mind. This is the object of revelation ; this the final cause of that dispensation of Providence.

B. That may be its object ; but no book-revelation ever accomplished it. The infallibility of book-

revelation might look very well as a theory, a dogma ; but practically it is useless. The reason is obvious. The infallible word of God is submitted to the judgment of a certain number of people, to be dealt in the way they choose : they interpret the passages of the book, construe words, and draw conclusions according to their respective arbitrary views and opinions. And what is the result ? In consequence of different interpretations different theories and doctrines start up : these give birth to hostile churches and sects. These churches again in course of time undergo many schisms : and thus divisions and subdivisions arise amongst the upholders of the same book. Thus far from securing unity of opinion and faith the infallible book originates innumerable differences and even contradictions and hostilities. This is the philosophy of the argument. It is easy to verify it historically. Examine the history of Christianity, and you will at once find that the Bible has not succeeded in opposing its fixedness to the prevalence of jarring opinions and even diametrically opposite theories. Though guarded within the holy sanctuary of an avowed infallibility it has not been able to protect itself from the influences of sectarianism. Not only in the rendering of passages and words have different and contradictory opinions been offered, but even in the explanation of some of its fundamental tenets. The Roman Catholic, the Lutheran, the Gnostic, the Quaker, the Presbyterian, the Methodist, the Calvinist, the Universalist, the Unitarian started from the same book, the same fixed text, yet went different ways : and there is perhaps between the most devout Roman Catholic and the staunchest Unitarian as much disparity, essentially speaking, as between a Hindu and a Mahometan. Nay, as intelligence is widening, and private judgment becoming more independent and liberal, the Church

of Christ is being divided into more sections. The great excitement created by the "Essays and Reviews" of the *septim contra Christum* distinctly shows that the Church of England cannot long remain as an integral body. The fact is, an infallible book-revelation without infallible interpretation is simply useless. Infallible Hebrew or Sanskrit or Arabic necessitates infallible translation: infallible translations require infallible commentaries and criticisms, infallible dictionary and chronology, infallible history and ethnology, &c. In short, in order that a book-revelation may fairly stand out as the infallible word of God for all practical purposes, it is indispensable that all the lights by which we are to arrive at its meaning must be infallible too. But even this is not all. Let the text be infallible; let all means by which it should be interpreted be also infallible; the question still stares us in the face—how can a book which is all truth interpreted by infallible keys communicate to our minds all truth?—how can objective infallibility convert itself into a subjective fact? Is the working mind, the interpreting agent infallible? This problem must be satisfactorily solved ere the doctrine of infallibility can be accepted. For what avails a splendid array of objective infallibilities, if the process of interpretation and comprehension is to be conducted by our fallible judgments? Let there be a world of outward infallibilities: "the mind is its own world, and can create a hell out of heaven".

It is clear then that a book whether fallible or infallible cannot be identified with revelation, and truths revealed can only mean truth infallibly revealed in actual consciousness. The essence of revelation lies not in the outward book, but in the "kingdom within"—not in the text, but in the soul. To the truth of this Christendom bears ample and undeniable testimony. What does the distinction between the

"letter" and the "spirit" signify? What means the doctrine that none unenlightened by the Holy Ghost can understand the truths of the Bible? No Christian can deny that the Bible is not sufficient; that the mere letter, the mere book is nothing; and that there is an essential difference between the Bible as a book and the Bible as a revelation—the Bible read by those who are not spiritually enlightened and the Bible read with the aid of the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Thus, whatever view we may take of the subject, unless we are dogmatical, we are at last brought to the same central principle that revelation is a spiritual communication made to the mind, and is realized and realizable in the intuitional consciousness only.

I. All this I admit; and I think every unprejudiced man, whatever his creed be, should do the same. You take a scientific and catholic view of the subject, and dwell only on the actual capacities of the mind in its relation to revelation: your observations therefore cannot but be acceptable to all. No good reasoner can deny that revelation is a state of the mind, and that unless it is such it is idle to argue the excellency or the infallibility of an outward book. But it strikes me that you are dilating on the *potentialities* of human nature. Your arguments do not satisfactorily meet the *actual* deficiencies and wants of mankind. It may be admitted that a revelation of saving truths is possible in the intuitive consciousness. But this revelation does not actually exist in all men. Man has practically turned astray from the truth; darkness is within him; his nature is depraved. Under such circumstances is not an external revelation necessary which may deliver the soul from ignorance and impurity, and regenerate it in faith and holiness?

B. Undoubtedly. Such a revelation is indis-

pensable; and its importance it is impossible to exaggerate. This is revelation in its secondary and comprehensive signification. In this sense it means an outward objective collection of principles coincident with our natural and intuitive convictions, which renders more vivid our intuitive apperceptions, and aids us in the attainment of truth and salvation. Such an objective revelation far from militating against the argument already enunciated does rather presuppose and depend upon the intuitions of the mind, insomuch that they constitute the life and evidence of all objective revelations.

I. That is only *negative* evidence and has hardly any value: for there are many passages, for instance in the Bible which do not tally with any principle within, but which must nevertheless be accepted as true. The fact is that miracles and external evidences in general constitute the only positive evidence of book-revelation—the foundation on which rational faith in the doctrines of book-revelation rests.*

* "Taking into account the various questions whose answers, on the one side or the other, form the sum total of Evidences for or against the claims of the Christian Faith;—the genuineness and authenticity of the documents; the judgment and good faith of the writers; the testimony to the actual occurrence of prophecies and miracles, and their relation to the religious teaching with which they are connected; the character of the Teacher Himself, that one portrait, which, in its perfect purity and holiness and beauty, stands alone and unapproached in human history or human fiction; those rites and ceremonies of the elder Law, so significant as typical of Christ so strange and meaningless without Him; those predictions of the promised Messiah, whose obvious meaning is rendered still more manifest by the futile ingenuity which strives to pervert them; the history of the rise and progress of Christianity, and its comparison with that of other religions; the ability or inability of human means to bring about the results which it actually accomplished; its antagonism to the current ideas of the age and country of its origin; its effects as a system on the moral and social condition of subsequent

B. How can that be? Miracles can never authenticate a doctrine—so says the Bible itself. Truth as well as untruth is supported by miracles: good men and bad men are represented as miracle-workers.† How then can truth be distinguished from untruth, a prophet from an impostor? If not by miracles, evidently by some other criterion independent of miracles. What connection truth has with miracles, both external senses and the understanding fail to ascertain. Truth is truth, and untruth untruth whether supported or unsupported by miraculous exhibitions. Truth is truth simply because it is truth, and untruth untruth simply because it is untruth. Moreover the whole theory of external evidences particularly amounts to a perfectly useless dogma, to say the least. If Christianity rests on the pedestal of external evidences as the sole testimony to its infallibility, if a critical study of, and an absolute belief in these evidences constitute the condition on which Christian faith can be accepted, I can venture

generations of mankind; its fitness to satisfy the wants and console the sufferings of human nature; the character of those by whom it was first promulgated and received; the sufferings, which attested the sincerity of their convictions; the comparative trustworthiness of ancient testimony and modern conjecture; the mutual contradictions of conflicting theories of unbelief, and the inadequacy of all of them to explain the facts for which they are bound to account;—taking *all these and similar questions into full consideration*, are you prepared to affirm, as the result of the whole inquiry, that Jesus of Nazareth was an impostor, or an enthusiast, or a mythical figment; and his disciples, crafty and designing, or well-meaning but deluded men? For *be assured that nothing short of this is the conclusion which you must maintain*, if you reject *one jot or one tittle* of the whole doctrine of Christ.” —The Limits of Religious Thought by H. L. Mansel, B. D. pp. 161-2.

† Deut. XII, 1-5; Matth. VII. 22, 23; XXIV, 24; Mark IX. 38; 2 Cor. XI. 13.

to say with Mr. Young, the author of the Province of Reason, "there is not a rational believer in revelation in existence at this moment. There never has been a rational believer in revelation, not one individual, in any age.....Talk of Hebrew, Greek, Chaldaic, Syriac, and other languages of ancient codices, ancient versions, of historical, scientific philological, critical, hermeneutical researches and studies, of prophecies and miracles and inspiration, and the kinds of investigation belonging to them ! what do, what can the myriads of good Christian people know about any of these things ? Nothing, absolutely nothing." Such a rational belief is absolutely impossible. Indeed it is an untenable theory that Christian faith is possible only as the result of the historical study of its external evidences. Alas for Christianity if so it were ! If then the divinity of the Bible, so far as the faith of its followers is concerned, does not depend upon miracles nor external evidences in general, how is it to be verified ?

I. By the simple yet heaven-born truths which the Bible contains. The faith of "the myriads of good Christian people" rests on these truths : and historical and logical speculations form no part of the *simplicities* of Christian faith.

B. Precisely so. You mean to say Christianity stands on the moral evidences of the Bible. Do you not ?

I. Yes, these are the only evidences which, as they are "accessible to all men and to all ages" form actually the basis of Christian faith.*

* A true revelation, addressed to all mankind, and destined for all ages must be attested by evidence adequate and accessible to all men and to all ages. It must carry with it its own permanent and unfading credentials. The superhuman powers of its Preacher can authenticate it only to those who witness the exertion of them, and—more faintly and feebly—to those

B. Well, do not such evidences presuppose a light within us which enables us to distinguish truth from error? When we accept the truths of the Bible do we not do so because they find a response, an assent, an echo within us—because they tally and harmonise with the truths engraven on the soul?

I. Undoubtedly.

B. Is there not then within us even according to those who uphold book-revelation, a subjective light of truth, a "law written on the heart;" and is it not in accordance with this law that makes us accept and follow the many saving and eternal truths which are in the gospel? If such is the case why shall we worship any objective revelation in particular? why shall we become bibliolators? Are there not intuitive truths in the Koran and the Shasters, in Nanuck and Hafez? Is there not much to make us wise and righteous unto salvation in all these books and thousand others? Whatever tends to enkindle noble sentiments, remove impurities, awaken faith, and bestir the will to practical virtue—whatever leads us to know and love the truth as it is in God is fairly entitled to be called revelation: it is immaterial where it is found. Such is the catholic teaching of Brahmoism in regard to book-revelation. This however is only an application of the secondary signification I have already adverted to. But the application does not stop here. Books are not the only enlighteners of the mind. Does not the material universe edify us? Experience must reply—yes. Indeed the volume of nature displays throughout a moral purport. Every object in the universe, from

who have received and scrutinized *their* direct testimony:—The superhuman excellence of its doctrines may authenticate it through all times, and must constitute, therefore, its only adequate and abiding proof.—*Creed of Christendom* by—W. R. Greg.

the stupendous orbs revolving in the air to the smallest grain of sand reveals God. His power and majesty, His wisdom and justice, His love and providence shine everywhere. No one who has studied the wonders and beauties of nature can deny that sanctifying knowledge and saving truths are not confined to sermons and psalms—that there is nothing in the physical or the mental world which cannot edify and even save the soul—that the whole of Nature is ever and anon preaching million-voiced the truths of religion and the glories of the Almighty Creator. To “find tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in every thing” is certainly not a poetical illusion, but the experience of faith.

Thus if revelation is taken in its primary and literal signification, viz., knowledge communicated by God, it is possible only as a fact of the mind, and cannot therefore be identified with books or other external objects, however rich they may be with moral and religious significance. It is altogether subjective, and hence whatever truth remains in an objectified state is beyond its province. The dogma of book-revelation therefore falls to the ground. If on the other hand revelation is understood in its secondary acceptation, viz., whatever teaches us precious doctrines, and elevates our moral and religious conceptions and feelings, far from being confined to the texts of any particular book as the exclusive sacred repository of divine truths, it extends over all books that inculcate truth—nay it embraces the whole universe as a living revelation. Such is our doctrine of revelation. If from its theoretical we turn our eyes for a moment to its practical aspect we land in conclusions no less gratifying. It leads us to forsake all prejudices and bigotry, and cull truth wherever we can find it. Whether in the pages

of the Bible or the Koran, whether in the wonders of the phenomena of the mind, or the beauties and sublimities of the external world, whether in the magnificent starry convex above or the boundless ocean below, whether in the picturesque valley variegated with vernal flowers or the sweet strains of feathered songsters vibrating through the forest, whether in the development of human nature so significantly exhibited in the amphitheatre of history or in the principles of piety and love vividly portrayed in the biographies of great men—wherever we can find truth there we should go and accept it. We are thus taught the salutary lesson that truth is more precious than books—living spirit more than the dead letter—saving doctrine more than creeds and churches. Thus we are summoned to lay down all prejudices for age, locality, and person, and reverentially accept truth whether offered by a Jew or Gentile, Christian or a Heathen, Hindu or Mahomedan. Thus while different sects repair to their respective scriptures, and fight against each other to vindicate their own, a Brahmo beholds the Great Revealer, the Source of all revelation, in the region of his intuitive consciousness, and there receives at His feet the direct teachings of sanctifying knowledge : and while they worship the Bible, the Koran, or the Vedas, and shut up truth within the pales of time, place, and person, he seeks revelation in all times, in all places, and in all objects, for God is omnipresent and ever-living.

I. An excellent doctrine unquestionably. At once spiritual and catholic, rational in theory and useful in practice, it recommends itself to every liberal mind, to every soul that thirsts after wisdom and salvation. It is sectarian bigotry alone that leads men to reject it ; for whoever seeks truth for its sake must refuse to fall prostrate beneath the authority

of a particular book or person. Truth is neither yours nor mine. It is confined neither to Jerusalem nor Arabia, neither to Jesus nor Mahomet. It does not hang on the accidents of age or country, man or book. Why then do denominationalists hate and accurse each other, assuming that all beyond the pales of their holy church is error and untruth, and that their respective revelations are the only true revelations? Nor can I understand how Brahmos can be charged with having stolen all their truths from the Bible, as many Christians of the present day seem to believe.

B. I know not, friend, how it is that good hearts can take up with this glaring untruth, this preposterous absurdity. From the philosophy of Brahmic revelation I have already explained it clearly follows that the Brahmos acknowledge God alone as the Fountain-head of revelation, hold the inner revelation to be superior to all outward books, and repudiate all second-hand and derivative revelations. It is the primitive direct communication of God in the intuitive consciousness that constitutes a Brahmo's revelation : so that if his revelation is derived from any source at all it is from Infinite Intelligence ; and if he is guilty of theologic larceny his real guilt lies in having stolen from God's inexhaustible storehouse of truths in the " kingdom within." Perchance the Christians you speak of identify Brahmoism with Deism, and regard it as a heretical sect of Christianity, which though it sprang from the womb of Christianity, was nurtured in its cradle, and strengthened by its fostering care, impiously turned round against its mother. Or perhaps it is because Brahmoism coincides to some extent with Christianity that the latter calls the former a borrower. In neither case do we find arguments sufficiently cogent to justify the charge of borrowing. For Brahmoism is not like *Deism* of

Christian origin : it is *Theism* and has a divine origin. It does not hang on a mere disbelief in revelation and a meagre abstract notion of the Cause of the world. It starts originally with a positive code of theistic doctrines which are prior to the Bible, and to all book-revelations which existed long ere Moses taught and Jesus preached.* Again, the partial resemblance of Brahmoism to the creed of Christendom has been urged as an evidence to prove that the former has originated in the latter. Does it not rather prove that both Brahmoism and those tenets of Christianity which agree with it come from the same source, viz., God, and are therefore no more the truths of the West than of the East, no more the truths of Christians than of other men ? Are they not engraven on the human soul ? Do they not constitute a revelation of God to man ? The truth is that the catholicity of Brahmoism keeps it always open to the charge of borrowing ; and the followers of Hinduism have as much plausibility of argument on their side as those of Christianity in regard to that charge. But the charge involves a deeper absurdity ; it shows that the accusants not only overstep the boundaries of logic but are devoid of common sense in regard to the life and safety of their own creed. Arguments are not needed to convince us that an attempt to ignore the simple truths of

* If by the term *Theology* I understand the cognition of a primal being, that cognition is based either upon reason alone (*theologia rationalis*) or upon revelation (*theologia revelata*). The former cogitates its object either by means of pure transcendental conceptions, as an *ens originarium*, *realissimum ens entium*, and is termed *transcendental theology* ; or by means of conception derived from the nature of our own mind, as a supreme intelligence, and must then be entitled *natural theology*. The person who believes in a transcendental theology alone, is termed a *Deist* ; he who acknowledges the possibility of a natural theology also, a *Theist*—Kant's Critique of Pure Reason.

intuitive belief which form the cardinal tenets of Brahmoism, and to hold that *all* truths are *derived* from the Bible is simply an attempt to destroy the very foundations of the Bible and of Christian faith. Does not the Bible presuppose and stand upon certain underived religious truths? No one in his senses will deny that unless we believe that God exists, that He is intelligent, that He seeks our welfare, that He is holy and trustworthy, we cannot safely accept any book-revelation as the guide to our salvation. In fact those beliefs are the very conditions on which rational faith in a revelation is possible. To deny them, or to call them derivative is to take off the life-blood of Christianity—the pedestal on which the Bible stands. Moreover this principle is admitted by all thoughtful Christian theologians whose minds are not contaminated by the dangerous principles of materialistic or sensational philosophy, and who therefore believe in the existence of a *natural light* in the mind.

I. It is, indeed, to be deeply regretted that the superficial thinkers of Christendom should be so far carried away by bigotry as to call the Brahmos pilferers, forgetful of the true character of Brahmoism and also of the best interests of their own creed. I must also confess my inability to make out on what grounds they affirm that the Brahmos laugh at paper revelation and think it hateful to touch the Bible, when the spirit of Brahmoism is so liberal.

B. O my brother, it comports not with Brahmoism's exalted and catholic spirit to scoff at or hate book-revelations. Such a scoffing and hatred we consider an abomination. It is our duty to kiss and love truth wherever we can find it. O those charming psalms of David that draw tears of piety from the hardest heart and bring relief even unto the most afflicted! How inexhaustible are the riches of the

precepts of Jesus ! Can any one read them without being conscious that the heart is growing warm with love, and the soul strong with faith and enthusiasm ? If you have studied the writings of that child of resignation, *Hafiz*, have you not oftentimes felt yourself soaring upon the wings of faith to the regions above, and there drinking plenteously the sweets of God's love in His blissful presence and encircled by His affectionate arms ? When the *Upanishads* describe in stirring eloquence the sublimities of the spiritual world, what heart can crawl on the platform of vulgar cares, or forbear feeling the exalted joy and strength of the higher nature ? Can it be believed that a heart that lustily thirsteth after wisdom unto salvation would reject or even view with indifference the noble ideas set forth in such books ? A prejudice in this matter betrays only a disregard of truth : and a Brahmic heart abhors such a prejudice.

I. I cannot, my friend, after taking all these arguments into consideration, hesitate for one moment to accept the Brahmic theory of revelation. Its scientific correctness is unquestionable : its utility remarkably great. But what strikes me above all, is its freedom from those prejudices in which sectarian theologies abound. Assuredly Brahmoism is the religion of love and liberty. Would that the truths and delights of Brahmic revelation were fully understood and enjoyed by all mankind !

I have now two more subjects of doctrinal theology to discuss—Atonement and Salvation. As we have no time to-day we may take up those subjects in our next interview.

ATONEMENT AND SALVATION.

No 12]

[June, 1861.

Inquirer. Though I admit that Brahmoism can furnish us with a revelation from God, I doubt its capacity to save us from sin. Your doctrines regarding the attributes of God, next world, and the destiny of life tend only to prove the philosophical correctness of your creed; but methinks, it leaves the great practical problem of salvation unsolved. It affords a safe and peaceful harbour to the mind which would otherwise have been perpetually tossed upon the waves of doubt: but it does not respond to the deep interrogation of the soul—"what shall I do to be saved?" If my heart is wicked, of what use will a knowledge of divine attributes be to me? Will it not merely tend to heighten my sufferings by keeping me incessantly alive to the magnitude of my depravity, without pointing out any remedy? In fact the supremacy of a religion consists chiefly in its power to dispense salvation. Hence it is incumbent on you to prove that Brahmoism offers a satisfactory solution of the problem of salvation—that while it reveals wisdom to the mind, it also secures the deliverance of the soul from sin.

Brahmo. I don't see any difficulty in the solution of that problem. Brahmoism by representing God as infinite in mercy and loving-kindness gives hope and assurance to the grossest sinner that he will receive salvation at His hands. He whose name is Love cannot be indifferent to the cries of the penitent sinner: He who looketh evermore after our welfare,

and ministereth to the wants of the body cannot be supposed to refuse aid to the soul in its struggles for deliverance from sin.

I. No, my friend, the solution is not so easy as you seem to suppose. True, the divine attribute of mercy proves my implication that the God of Love gives salvation to sinners ; but is not such indulgence to sinners incompatible with another attribute, viz., justice ? Let a sinner feel as bitterly as possible the torments of remorse, let him implore pardon with the utmost earnestness he can command : he may persuade mercy to respond to his plaint ; but will his prayers avail to turn justice from its strict and even-handed course ? Is not God infinite in justice as He is in goodness. How then can a sin once committed be atoned for, as it has already stirred justice to the execution of its rigid and irrevocable decrees ? That which is done is done : you *must* suffer for it. It is utterly impossible in the nature of things to undo it ; the sin that has been once committed cannot be uncommitted—no, not even by the most remorseful supplications for mercy.

B. True, atonement is impossible in the nature of things if it means uncommitting a sin already committed. This is but the vulgar and popular idea of atonement. In order to ascertain whether divine mercy operates in behalf of a sinner—whether under its salutary influences he can atone for his sins, you have only to look into the present state of his mind : for if you are satisfied that he has turned away from his former wickedness by means of repentance and prayer, and has established his mind in righteousness you have no other choice but to admit that his sins have been expiated by the grace of God.

I. I apprehend the inference is unwarrantable. You seem to overlook the main difficulty Well, what is your idea of atonement ?

B. Atonement, scientifically considered, is nothing more than a return to God. The word *atone* simply means to be *at one* with God—to be reconciled to Him. By the commission of sin we turn astray from Him : we cease to enjoy His company. By atonement we renounce our sin, again draw near to Him, and enjoy the blessings of His company. Hence the turning back to God is the whole philosophy of atonement. Hence our belief that “repentance is atonement,” because repentance is the indispensable means of turning away from iniquity and returning to God.

I. All that is perfectly unobjectionable. But the mere circumstances of eschewing evil cannot constitute reconciliation with God. It is admitted on all hands that, unless some sacrifice is made, some equivalent is offered no sinner can, by the mere fact of being reformed, receive His forgiveness. By transgressing His sacred laws we offend Him, and incur His serious displeasure ; and unless we offer adequate compensation, we cannot expect to be restored to His favour ;—So that atonement, though it denotes reconciliation, becomes synonymous with the means of appeasing an offended Deity.

B. Appeasing an offended Deity ! What an unworthy conception of the divine nature ! Such a conception might find a place in the barbarous creeds of superstition and idolatry, but is undoubtedly incompatible with the spirit of rational theology. Is it not audacious to liken the Most High to the vindictive and vengeful creatures of earth ? Is He accessible to the passions of flesh ? Is he like man offended and enraged by insult, and appeased and satisfied by an apology or bribe, by tears or sacrifices ? Is He a ruthless and blood-thirsty despot whose demoniac anger must seek vengeance and retaliation unless pacified by blood ? Does He, like

the heartless Jew in the stubbornness of his resolve to retaliate, wrathfully demand his "pound of flesh?" Reason shudders at such horrid misrepresentations of the Deity! These are evidently the revolting dogmas of anthropomorphism which imputes to the Deity the passions and infirmities of the flesh, and the varied susceptibilities of good and evil incident to humanity, and in a word "hypostatizes and deifies" its own limited conceptions instead of worshipping the true God. It is from these dogmas that the unnumbered forms of sacrifice and offering have sprung in different ages and countries to lave the feet of the Deity with the blood of beasts and even human beings! Such ideas of God are certainly unacceptable to the enlightened spirit of the present age. The nineteenth century cannot drive itself to such an extent of infatuation as to believe the absurdities of the antiquated theology of Hinduism or Pentateuchism, and identify God with Kali or the vindictive Jehovah of the Old Testament. Nothing is so repugnant to its mind, so abhorrent to its feelings as to attempt to propitiate the Deity by such offerings as fragrant roses, handsome eatables, &c., or purchase the pardon of an angered God with the blood of Jesus Christ,—unworthy idea of that blessed child of God! Our God is Absolute love. His is not the finite, phenomenal love of humanity, but everlasting and abiding love, immutable as His nature. In Him "there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning." He loveth us always, He changeth not though we change: our virtues and vices do not modify His nature. He is the "eternal and immutable Now of absolute Love." The whole change which sin brings on is in ourselves, not in Him: so likewise the change consequent on atonement. Our sin does not stir His vengeance: our entreaties do not dissuade Him from His uniform purpose. What means then

appeasing the wrath of God ? What need of sin-offerings ? True sacrifice means sacrifice of sin ; true offering is the offering of the heart ; true atonement a return to righteousness and thereby to God :— and divine forgiveness far from being, like human forgiveness, cessation of resentment is simply a restoration of the sinner to the blessings of divine love. Thus you see that the mere fact of eschewing sin and purifying the heart constitutes atonement.

I. I now admit that forgiveness in the sense of suppression of anger and revenge is not applicable to the Deity, and an attempt to buy such forgiveness by offering sacrifices is altogether irrational. But I do not yet see how mere reformation or purification of the heart is reconciliation with God. If there is no variableness in God in regard to His love, the same is true in regard to His justice : and if infinite love dispels all apprehensions of divine vengeance and ignores all propitiatory offerings, infinite justice dispels all hopes of pardon and necessitates the infliction of adequate retribution on the sinner. Can subsequent reformation do aught to nullify the effect of former sin ? The sin has been committed, the awful sentence has been passed : can the foregoing of that sin arrest the operation of that sentence ? In the sacred tribunal of Heaven “ there is no shuffling : ” the decrees of justice are irreversible : there is no forgiveness at the expense of justice. If you admit that God’s laws are immutable, how can you escape punishment ? and if you cannot escape punishment, is not your belief that you are reconciled to God deceptive and treacherous ?

B. I do not mean to say that atonement or reconciliation is to be effected at the expense of justice. Divine justice must be satisfied : due punishment must be inflicted. Justice and mercy must harmoniously operate.

I. That is just the difficulty I have experienced. How can God be just and yet justify the ungodly? How can divine justice and mercy be reconciled?

B. In the dispensation of punishment justice and mercy are both manifest. The difficulty you speak of arises solely from a misconception of the real *end* of punishment. God punishes sinners either for their weal or woe. Now it is evident that all arguments are against the latter, for no one is so foolish as to suppose that God inflicts punishment on sinners for gratifying His insatiable thirst for vengeance, that He delights in their agonies. It is far our welfare then that He visits our sins with due punishment. When a father chastises his refractory son, has he not the amendment of the latter in view? Does not the same generous motive actuate the school-master to use the rod? Do not courts of justice award punishment in order to repress crime and secure life and property? Far from displaying malevolence or vengeance, does not the administration of justice in all civilized countries exhibit good will? To push the argument further, does not the absence of justice in all these cases betray likewise the absence of benevolence? Nothing is more common than to ascribe inhumanity to those who punish for the sake of gratifying anger and vengeance, and reprobating as imprudent those who withhold punishment when it is necessary for the sake of amendment. Who justifies maternal indulgence if it spoils the child? Who vindicates tribunals of justice if they systematically suffer crime to go unpunished? If, then, in the case of men justice divorced from benevolence is a monstrosity, if, humanly speaking, rational justice acts harmoniously with a desire to promote the welfare of others, how can we ascribe to Infinite Loving-kindness a spurious and suicidal justice which ignores the very principle

What constitutes its life and glory ? Can reason impute to God what is blameworthy in man ? The God of Love punishes us not for punishment's sake, not for vengeance's sake, but because he loves us, and desires our welfare. Suppose due retribution were remitted, and sinners were systematically forgiven, would not an impetus be afforded by such indulgence to all the recklessness of unrestrained and unres trainable wickedness ? None will deny that remission of moral punishment far from being conducive is hopelessly prejudicial to the interests of sinners. The truth is that such punishment, like all generous punishments, is remedial : it has amendment for its object. It acts like the unpalatable drug, painful in its immediate effects but beneficial in the end. It is the only means which the sinner has of even becoming conscious of his iniquities : its awful peals arouse him from his death-like sleep ; its intolerable agonies assure him that he is not healthy, and thus bestir him to suitable exertions for amendment. Can such means be withheld from him without interfering with the best interests of his soul ? It is infliction, therefore, and not remission of punishment that shows the Father's love towards His children. If such is the case can we persuade ourselves to look at punishment with any other feeling than gratitude ? Is not a prayer for remission of punishment equal to saying—" Lord, permit me to continue uninterruptedly in in my sins ? " Should we not rather drink the cup of retribution though bitter, saying—" Whatsoever the Lord hath given the same shall I drink, for He doeth all for my good." I hope you now clearly understand that God punishes sinners for their good, that all His inflictions are remedial and salutary. Behold the harmony between divine justice and goodness. Justice demands that the iniquitous should be visited with adequate punishment : goodness

demands that their welfare should be promoted. Punishment is inflicted—justice is satisfied : amendment is sought—goodness is satisfied. Thus in the act of punishment justice and mercy instead of running counter to each other most beautifully harmonize. Why then do honest inquirers after truth suffer themselves to be startled by the visionary spectre of the irreconcilableness of divine justice and mercy ?

I. I do not at present see anything objectionable in what you have said : nay your arguments seem to me to be quite rational and plausible. But methinks you take a very mild view of punishment. Are not those who have transgressed the law of God, bade defiance to His repeated remonstrances, and set at nought the united dictates of gratitude and love, entitled to a degree of punishment whose intensity and duration the mind cannot adequately conceive, and are infinitely greater than you or I may be disposed to believe ? Indeed a wish for mild punishment is very natural, sinful as we all are ! Does not sin against Infinite Holiness deserve infinite punishment—eternal hell ?

B. It is perfectly immaterial whether the punishment is heavy or light so long as its object is admitted to be the amendment of sinners. That the frightful nature of sin deserves a punishment whose severity is beyond the reach of conception no one can venture to question. Habitual violation of God's law, horrid as it is in the abstract, if viewed in connection with the solemn relations in which we stand to Him, brings the strongest assurance with it that a most awful punishment awaits the sinner in comparison with whose reality the most vivid descriptions of poetical fancy are as nothing. This however does by no means affect the arguments I have adduced. God may visit us with the direst torments : but such

torments are intended for our welfare, and will continue till they effect this object. But to believe that they are everlasting,—that sinners are doomed to eternal perdition, is to accept a dogma which is subversive of the principles of divine justice and mercy I have already explained. If the commission of one sin disentitles man, for ever, to the privileges of God's love and the blessings of virtue, by bringing on eternal punishment, the legitimate object of punishment is not accomplished, the necessity of amendment is precluded, mercy becomes a name, and the God of love is made the most vindictive monster that the human mind can conceive ! In fact the theory of eternal punishment seems to be only a means of frightening people into irrational creeds.

I. If it is true, then, that God's mercy is not interfered with by His justice, and that the grossest sinner after suffering punishment can find acceptance with Him, what is the necessity for mediatorial redemption and vicarious atonement ?

B. None whatever. The very idea of delivering a sinner from his iniquity by saddling another party with it is preposterous in the extreme. Yet it is upheld with the object of reconciling God's justice and mercy. But how justice can be satisfied by visiting the innocent with the grave consequence of sin—how mercy be shown by assuring a sinner of his being out of the reach of punishment and amendment, no unbiassed mind can determine. In fact, vicarious atonement contradicts both justice and mercy. Let us canvass the question more scientifically, that we may find the whole philosophy of the doctrine of vicarious atonement. The transfer of punishment from man to man is an utter impossibility in the moral government of God. Those who believe otherwise betray an ignorance of the *nature* of moral punishment. The punishment of sin is not, as some

suppose, a penalty arbitrarily and artificially connected with sin, but is its natural and necessary consequence. It is not something which a capricious judge awards, and which might be remitted, extenuated, or transferred at his pleasure, but a necessary consequence of sin fixed by the Creator of the universe, and can be separated from it only by upsetting the established order of things. It follows sin in just the same way as an effect follows a cause. If you bring your fingers in contact with fire the necessary and unavoidable consequence will be a burning sensation in your fingers. That sensation *must* follow the effect of the contact. Similarly the mind that commits sin *must* be visited with due retribution as the effect of that sin. Sin potentially involves its own punishment "as the acorn contains the oak." In short the relation that subsists between sin and punishment is that of cause and effect, and is therefore *necessary* not *arbitrary*. Such being the case it is impossible that you should suffer the punishment which my sin deserves, since the cause being in me, the effect must likewise be in me. In order that you may suffer the penalty you must have the sin which is its cause in you. Innocence can never be the victim of that retribution which is due to sin alone: nor can sin enjoy the reward which is due to virtue alone. Can I by any imaginable contrivance—by any means earthly or unearthly transfer to my brother's body that burning sensation to which the contact of my fingers with fire exposes me? If not, would it not be as absurd to suppose I can pass on to my brother's soul that punishment to which my sin has rendered me liable? God's laws are immutable as well in the spiritual as in the physical world. The transfer of moral punishment then is absolutely impossible: and it is idle to discuss whether the transfer is to be made to an inferior animal or a human

being, A scapegoat is but a fantastic dream. It is an imaginary animal that inhabits the region of dogmatic and idle theology, but is not a living reality. The ideas of cleansing sin by sacrifices, holy ablutions or the recital of sacred texts, of buying atonement with the price of blood, &c., are only relics of anthropomorphism. Let theorists dream dreams, *there is no royal road to salvation* : there is no easy and convenient mode of atonement : there can be none. Behold then the baselessness of the stupendous fabric of the dogma of vicarious atonement ! Nor is this dogma less mischievous in its practical tendencies than it is absurd in theory. By giving sinners the assurance that the awful punishment of their sins will be transferred to others provided they believe in some scheme of mediatorial atonement, and thereby dispelling all fears as to the heavy penalty which actually awaits them, it systematically encourages wickedness, far from discouraging it. By identifying virtue and vice with dogmatic belief and unbelief, with consent and dissent, it makes the sinner believe he is forgiven in spite of the rottenness of his soul, and thus leads him to forego all attempts at attaining actual purity. It makes sin and punishment barterable commodities : it paralyzes divine justice, makes punishment a mere name, lulls conscience to sleep, gives an imaginary elysium to sin, and converts God's moral government into a scene of lawlessness, injustice, and disorder, in which "the elect" buy out the law. Behold on the other hand the salutary effects of the Brahmic theory of atonement ! It guarantees adequate reward and punishment to virtue and vice, and regards the separation of reward from virtue and punishment from sin absolutely impossible. It upholds justice by invariably giving every man his due. It discourages sin by making penalty inevitable, and repudiating all attempts to stave it off by the observance of

external ceremonies It encourages virtue by making it incumbent on sinners to repent for sin, and make the best exertions to eschew it. It keeps us always alive to the actual state of the heart, and constrains us to pass through all the exercises and struggles of the soul which are requisite to purity. It makes purity the life of atonement, repentance and amendment the condition of forgiveness.

I. Your arguments are certainly unanswerable on philosophical grounds. But are they not such as startle and dishearten sinners? Does not Brahmoism ever and anon preach a sermon of despair to them? The sum total of its teachings, as I could gather from what you have said, is simply this:—a sin once committed can by no means be undone: moral punishment can neither be remitted nor transferred: it must come with its whole weight upon sinners. Are not such doctrines calculated to extinguish even the last ray of hope and joy in the sinner's mind? Instead of showing him the road to salvation, and delivering him from his troubles, they only prove his case hopeless, by aggravating in a ten-fold ratio the already overpowering fears and anxieties of his mind.

B. This brings us to the subject of salvation. I have already explained to you our views of atonement. You will presently see how they bear upon the doctrine of salvation. Salvation literally means deliverance—from *salvo*, to save. Deliverance from what?—one would naturally ask. If it means deliverance from *punishment*, salvation is impossible, for, as I have already said, the connection of sin with punishment is necessary. Nor is such deliverance desirable if punishment is the means of amendment. But salvation, true salvation, denotes simply deliverance from *sin*. In this sense it is both possible and desirable. To be freed from the effect so long as the

cause continues to operate is not possible ; but to be freed from the cause itself is possible. To be relieved from the taste of an unpalatable drug, if it insure restoration of health is not desirable ; but to be relieved from the malady which demands the use of that drug is simply what we desire. Justice will enforce its irreversible decrees : sin will be visited with adequate punishment : but Mercy is not deaf to the cries of the contrite sinner—the doors of salvation are open to all. When the sinner thinks of punishment, he trembles and quails, and feels his lot hard “beyond compare ;” but when once he looks to the merciful arm that administers the punishment, he finds consolation and relief. When he sees the cup he weeps ; he rejoices when he sees that a Father fills the cup. When he remembers that the Judge is also the Father—that the Moral Governor is also the God of salvation, he cannot hesitate to “kiss the rod” that falls upon him. Can anything be more cheering to the sinner than the conviction that He whose laws he has repeatedly transgressed, whose claims to his affection, gratitude, and obedience he has with the utmost impunity repelled, is still ready to lead him back to the paths of righteousness, provided he sincerely repents for his sins. Our God is not a God of vengeance—a vindictive blood-thirsty tyrant, but the God of infinite love, all whose ways are merciful and kind’ He does not look at our sins with a vengeful eye, nor does He view them with indifference. Ever anxious for our salvation, He watches us with more than a father’s solicitude, with more than a mother’s tenderness. Whether rich or poor, strong or weak, virtuous or vicious, we are ever under the wings of His gracious providence. In hours of trial and difficulty He is the same affectionate Father and Friend that He is in hours of gladness and prosperity. When the sinner deeply repents for his sins, struggles

for deliverance, and prays for strength, the God of Love in the fulness of His mercy humbles Himself to hear his cries and lift him from the gulf of sin. As he prays and labours, he gains greater strength and receives greater light in the presence of his Lord. To every sinner, even the grossest, the promise of reconciliation hath been made. The arms of Everlasting Mercy are stretched for the reception of all ; the fault is ours if we neglect to have recourse to Him. He shuts the doors of grace against none ; the fault is ours if we do not enter the doors. It is not He that refuses salvation but we that refuse to accept it. " Pray—pray sincerely, earnestly and unceasingly," says Brahmoism unto the sinner, " resolve solemnly, labour energetically, persevere steadily—above all, throw yourself wholly upon the arms of the God of Love ; He will help you in overcoming temptations, and sacrificing the enemies of the soul by giving you strength, enthusiasm and fortitude. Rely upon him—the sole Friend of the fallen, the sole Protector of sinners—and He shall save you." I value and love Brahmoism chiefly for having taught me to take shelter under the mercy of such a God. Without Him life is death, joy sorrow, and affluence want : with Him we become rich and happy—all our wants are lost in His fulness. He is our all : our Father, our Teacher, our Saviour. He is our only hope amidst the trials and perils of life. He is our light, our love, our life. To Him, the God of salvation, belongeth glory in heaven and earth—in time and eternity. May all sinners learn to place their deepest faith in Him, their only Benefactor and Friend—that the sweets of salvation may abound in their lives !—Dearer to me than my life is Brahmoism, for she teaches me that my God shall save me from my sins. Glory to Infinite Love !—So indulgent to sinners, so kind to the poor and the

humble in spirit, so exuberant in mercy to the weak !
O, my brother, the heart cannot contain His love—

I. Here my discussion ends. All my wants have been supplied, all my doubts dispelled. Thanks to your kindness, my dearest brother—glory to God's providence, I have at last known where to rest my faith. O, the simplicities and sweets of Brahmoism ! Brahmoism, tender child of God, knows only to depend upon her kind Father for all things—for revelation, for strength, for faith, for purity and for salvation. She depends not upon external objects—upon men or books, forms or ceremonies. In the innermost recesses of the heart she worships her Father, and becomes pure in His Holiness. May Brahmoism find a place in every heart ! May the worship of the One true God reign in heaven and earth to the glory of His eternal nature ?—Oh, for the day when the banners of Brahmoism shall be planted in every land—when sectarian dogmatism and discord shall perish—and LOVE, PURITY, JOY, AND BLESS'DNESS prevail throughout the length and breadth of God's earth ! Farewell.

-

AN APPEAL TO YOUNG INDIA.

[1865.

FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN AND FRIENDS,

I purpose to communicate to you a few thoughts and suggestions on your duties in the present critical period of the social history of India. I do not pretend to edify you. Mine is an humbler mission. I approach you as your servant—as one who would humbly serve his country and countrymen. Earnestly do I pray and trust you will accept my services,—and may Providence graciously vouchsafe to bless them to the good of my country!

India, our fatherland, is a great country, and is destined to occupy a very high place in the scale of nations. The age in which we live is also peculiarly important as marking the transition state of native society. Both these considerations are stirring and cannot fail to rouse our thoughts and energies. Born in India, natives of the soil, and living in the present age we cannot but look with peculiar interest upon the scenes and events around us. Mighty revolutions are taking place on all sides. Every department of native society is undergoing change, radical and organic change. Ideas and tastes are changing, customs and manners are changing, old institutions are giving place to new ones, aspirations and energies are turning into new channels; there are changes even in our mode of living. The spirit of Western enlightenment and civilization is at work in the core of Hindu society, and is, somewhere perceptibly, somewhere secretly transforming, remo-

dwelling and revolutionising its entire organism. Its powerful influence has shaken the enormous fabric of Hinduism to its very foundations, and convulsed the very heart of the nation ; and every sphere of native thought and occupation, intellectual, social, political, commercial and religious is in a state of violent fermentation. Can you stand as unconcerned spectators of this mighty revolutionary movement ? Do not your hearts throb with anxiety as you ponder on it and think of the future of your great country ? Are not your best interests involved in the struggle going on around you between the old and new, the native and foreign, between established usages and the advancing tide of civilisation ? Who can sleep peacefully amid the din and clatter and wild excitement of the battle-field ? When all India from the Himalaya to Cape Comorin seems to be one scene of revolutionary strife—of bristling bayonets and roaring artillery, of continued bombarding and cannonading on the old forts of Hinduism, shall we sleep on the couch of imagined security ? In the midst of such a scene surely we ought to be awake to our real situation and conduct ourselves with a full sense of our responsibilities. For what will come out of the formidable crisis which has overtaken us it is difficult to divine. Dire disasters are impending, awful contingencies are hovering about us, and unless we seasonably provide against them great shall be the ruin. The whole scene is stirring, and imperatively calls upon us all to meet the crisis full in the face and do our duty manfully. And surely those who, through selfish indolence, apathy or fear, would neglect to do their duty will expose themselves and posterity to misery. Those who intend to float securely in their old bark on the unruffled sea of established errors and superstition will be undeceived when the dashing surges of progress will wreck and shatter to pieces

their frail bark. Those who fancy they are safe in the impregnable citadel of orthodoxy and count with certainty upon surviving all attacks, will find when too late, that the champions of truth have effected a breach, marched in and forced their surrender at their immense cost. Those who, though enlightened, are, yet, afraid to encounter social persecution, and therefore put on the cloak of hypocrisy and seek comfort in compromise, will not only bring upon themselves misery and reproach but will bequeath an accursed legacy of sin and suffering to their descendants. Those again on the other hand who regardless of reformation would take advantage of the present unsettled state of things to introduce foreign fashions for mere pleasure's sake, will find themselves and followers in a sea of dissipation and reckless voluptuousness. Those who without deliberation or foresight would venture upon innovations for innovations' sake, or embark upon half measures to remedy only partial evils, will throw away both good and evil in one indiscriminate sweep or introduce worse evils than those already existing. While on the contrary, those who armed with conscience and courage will manfully combat prejudices and obnoxious institutions, freely embrace what is good and as freely shun what is evil, and consistently labour to reform themselves, their families and their country, will pass unscathed through the ordeal, themselves blessed with the laurels of glory and blessing their country with truth, freedom and happiness. In fact nothing but fearless and disinterested patriotism, regulated and sustained by a keen sense of duty, will save native society from the evils under which it is groaning, or guard it against new evils; nothing but this will enable India to pass safely through the present crisis and rise from its trials reformed and regenerated.

During this period of transition it is, therefore, evidently the duty of all who are interested in India's welfare to labour conscientiously to remove her wants, alleviate her sufferings, guard her against imminent perils and place her in the way of social, moral and religious advancement. Such an arduous and important task belongs specially to Young India—to the enlightened representatives of the rising generation. To you your country looks up for protection and prosperity. Her future greatly depends upon you, and from you she expects at least the foundation of her future progress and well-being. You hold in your hands the key of her destiny, and before the tribunal of God and man you stand accountable for the solemn trust. If you discharge your duties well and conscientiously her regeneration will fairly commence. Do not then neglect her claims upon your sympathy. Let patriotism warm your hearts and quicken your energies, as education, I hope, has expanded your understanding and enlarged your views. If your eyes have been opened to the actual condition of your mother country, and to the great duties you owe her, then flinging away selfish apathy and indifference apply yourselves with adequate vigor to her amelioration. All that I may say will fail to make you realize her lamentable position. Behold with your own eyes the extent of her destitution, physical, moral and social; if you have hearts to feel you must offer prompt and compassionate response to her loud cries for succour, and if you have energies you must forthwith run to her rescue. In order that you may act well, you should feel strongly; to feel strongly you have but to study your own experiences. Argumentative appeals and glowing descriptions will conjure up but a sorry picture in comparison with what your own observations and experiences tell of the depth

of India's degradation. Would you realize it? Look at yourselves, enchained to customs, deprived of freedom, lorded over by an ignorant and crafty priesthood, your better sense and better feelings all smothered under the crushing weight of custom; look at your homes, scenes of indescribable misery, your wives and sisters, your mothers and daughters immured within the dungeon of the zenana, ignorant of the outside world, little better than slaves whose charter of liberty of thought and action has been ignored: look at your social constitution and customs, the mass of enervating, demoralizing and degrading causes there working. Watch your daily life, how almost at every turn you meet with some demand for the sacrifice of your conscience, some temptation to hypocrisy, some obstacle to your improvement and true happiness. Say from your own experience, whether you are not hemmed in on all sides by a system of things which you cannot but hate and abhor, denounce and curse; whether the spiritual government under which you live is not despotism of the most galling and revolting type, oppressive to the body, injurious to the mind and deadly to the soul? Are you not yoked to some horrid customs of which you feel ashamed, and which to say the least are scandal to reason, and have you not often sighed and panted for immediate deliverance? Are you not required to pass through a daily routine of social and domestic concerns against which your educated ideas and cultivated tastes perpetually protest? And considering the sum total of mischief and misery caused by Hinduism to its followers, religiously, socially and physically, have you not often wept bitterly in solitude, for your hard lot and that of your countrymen? Surely you do not require the aid of imagination to paint in gloomy colours the deplorable state of native society in order to rouse

your sympathy, excite your commiseration and stimulate your energies, when it is before you and encompasses you in all its awful reality. Surely you do not stand in need of any cogent arguments from others to convince you of what your own senses so painfully teach you and which your personal experiences confirm with irrefragable authority. Spare me then, fellow-countrymen, the task of arguing a matter which is so entirely supported by the testimonies of your own feelings, and observations. You must admit, for you yourselves have felt, the necessity of a thorough reformation of Hindu society ; I have shown its urgency in the present age of transition.

How this great and urgent work may be successfully achieved, and what are the special duties of Young India in connection with it,—these are the two practical questions which it is necessary to solve, that those who are in earnest may ascertain their precise line of action and qualify themselves for it so as to insure success.

A firm sense of duty ought to be the basis of all reform movements. It is dangerous to undertake them from any other motive. If in endeavouring to reform your country your object be merely to imitate foreign nations or introduce mere fashionable luxuries of civilization, or if you seek to abolish only some of the superficial evils of society and leave the more important ones intact with a view to avoid persecution ; if you gauge your work by the standard of your own convenience, or measure your movements according to the arithmetic of the utilitarian principle of happiness, you will either miss your primary object wholly, or in rescuing society from one species of evil open the floodgates of new and perhaps greater evils. Or if a mere desire of innovation of the moving impulse, however vigorous and apparently successful your movement may be at first, it will drop so soon

as the gloss of novelty wears away and probably after a few rash and indiscreet experiments. Well-directed and sustained reforms are possible only under a strong sense of duty. Let none embark on the enterprize of Indian reformation but those who feel morally impelled to engage in it as a sacred and bounden duty. Right motives will, in the long run, insure sound and successful reforms, and act as a safeguard against partial, fashionable and dangerous innovations. The moral sense will also induce earnestness without which success is hardly possible. It will arm the reformer with undaunted courage, firm resolution and uncompromising integrity of character, and will thereby prepare him for open and fearless combat with evil. Fully conscious of his accountability to God for his stewardship, he will neither shirk his duty, nor sacrifice truth for the sake of pleasing man. He will take a decided stand against evil of every kind, and successfully level the artillery of his mighty energies and moral heroism against its hitherto impregnable strongholds. Those, therefore, who desire to fight the battle of reform must be first of all suitably armed and equipped with a strong and abiding sense of duty.

Secondly, those who desire to reform their country must first reform themselves. Good examples are always powerful engines of conversion, while the fervid eloquence of hypocritical teaching obstructs instead of advancing the cause of truth. Let us be sincere and honest, let us show in our actual lives the truth we cherish in our hearts, without reserve or scruple, before we expect others to follow us. Let us show sufficient respect for ourselves ere we expect others to have respect for us. We should also remember that a nation is but the totality of individuals and that without the reformation of individuals there can be no national reformation. It has, however,

become too much the fashion with our pseudo-reformers to forget the individual in the nation, to confine themselves to preaching and theorizing, leaving action to every body else. But if every one thus walks out of himself to preach reform to others, who is to take care of self? If every one be determined not to act till others have made the road smooth for him, who is to begin? It is a fatal mistake to suppose that mere exhortations will exalt or regenerate India. Such a work belongs peculiarly to consistent, sincere and intrepid reformers who can say to others—Do as we do. It is infinitely better that we should have a handful of such reformers than that there should be about us a numerous host of blustering preachers who would preach truth to all but themselves. Those who aspire to the exalted office of true reformers must make their professions and practices agree, so that they may influence others by their living examples. Let them live down error instead of merely attempting to cry it down.

Lastly, the paths of reformation are thorny, and therefore they who tread these paths must be prepared for the thorns : there is no royal road to reformation. In India reforms cannot but be peculiarly trying. To over-turn the despotism of a mighty hierarchy firmly established for centuries in the heart of the nation, to abolish customs and institutions assimilated to the very blood of our social organism, to break asunder the ties of caste which bind together our domestic and social system—these are works of tremendous difficulty and must be achieved at great cost, and in the face of fierce opposition. Our reformers must be prepared for the worst. Hardships they must endure, persecution they must encounter, and there will be many a struggle and sacrifice and suffering before they succeed in their cause. In the initiative stage of reformation those who occupy the front ranks

must fully bear the brunt of opposition, and meet the desperate onset of newly awakened antagonism with fortitude and valor, that their followers may in future enjoy the fruits of their labours. They must sacrifice selfish considerations for their country, and the opinion of the world, for the approbation of conscience,—and at any cost, even with the price of their blood must they purchase truth for themselves and for their dear country.

These, I believe, are the three essential requisites of sound and successful reformation, the necessary qualifications of our reformers. Possessed of these they will acquit themselves honorably in the fulfilment of their mission, and with the power of truth they will bear down all opposition, triumph over their adversaries and lead their country into the path of regeneration. Let us now consider the chief evils in Hindu society against which they should direct their special exertions with a view to lay the foundation of a thorough social and moral reformation.

There can be no doubt that the root of all the evils which afflict Hindu society, that which constitutes the chief cause of its degradation is idolatry. Idolatry is the curse of Hindustan, the deadly canker that has eaten into the vitals of native society. It would be an insult to your superior education to say that you have faith in idolatry, that you still cherish in your hearts reverence for the gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon, or that you believe in the thousand and one absurdities of your ancestral creed. But however repugnant to your understanding and repulsive to your good sense the idolatry of your forefathers may be, there is not a thorough appreciation of its deadly character on moral grounds. It will not do to retain in the mind a speculative and passive disbelief in its dogmas, you must practically break with it as a dangerous sin and an abomination :

you must give it up altogether, as an unclean thing. You must discountenance it, discourage it, oppose it and hunt it out of your country. For the sake of your souls and for the sake of the souls of the millions of your countrymen, come away from hateful idolatry, and acknowledge the one supreme and true God, our Maker, Preserver and Moral Governor, not in belief only but in the every-day concerns and avocations of your life. By offering such uncompromising allegiance to Him and dedicating yourselves wholly to His service you will rescue your own consciences from corruption and sin, and your country from superstition, priestcraft, absurd rites, injurious practices and horrid customs and usages. By declaring a vigorous crusade against Hinduism you will lay the axe at the root of the tree of corruption.

Next to idolatry and vitally connected with its huge system is Caste. You should deal with it as manfully and unsparingly as with idolatry. That Hindu castism is a frightful social scourge no one can deny. It has completely and hopelessly wrecked social unity, harmony, and happiness, and for centuries it has opposed all social progress. But few seem to think that it is not so much as a social but as a religious institution that it has become the great scourge it really is. As a system of absurd social distinctions it is certainly pernicious. But when we view it on moral grounds it appears as a scandal to conscience, and an insult to humanity, and all our moral ideas and sentiments rise to execrate it, and to demand its immediate extermination. Caste is the bulwark of Hindu idolatry and the safeguard of Brahminical priesthood. It is an audacious and sacrilegious violation of God's law of human brotherhood. It makes civil distinctions inviolable, divine institutions, and in the name of the Holy God sows

perpetual discord and enmity among His children ! It exalts one section of the people above the rest, gives the former, under the seal of divine sanction, the monopoly of education, religion and all the advantages of social pre-eminence, and vests them with the arbitrary authority of exercising a tyrannical sway over unfortunate and helpless millions of human souls, trampling them under their feet and holding them in a state of miserable servitude. It sets up the Brahminical order as the very vice-gerents of the Deity and stamps the mass of the population as a degraded and unclean race, unworthy of manhood and unfit for heaven. Who can tolerate this woful despotism, this system of abhorrent slavery, this robbery of divine authority ? Fellow-countrymen, if you abjure idolatry and rally under the heavenly standard of the true God, you must establish and organize a new brotherhood on the basis of enlightened thoughts and sentiments : in this reformed alliance you must discard and discountenance all caste distinctions, that truth may be freely embraced by all, Brahmin and Sudra alike, and both by virtue of birthright may secure access to the blessings of spiritual freedom, progress and happiness, without let or hindrance. Abandon idolatry and seek the worship of the true God ; kill the monster caste and form a rational and religious brotherhood of all your reformed countrymen.

Thirdly, our Marriage Customs involve evils of great magnitude which urgently call for reform. They are not only repugnant to morality and reason, but constitute one of the powerful causes of the physical degeneracy of our nation. Horrid Polygamy leads this mighty train of evils. Supported by Kulinism it gives certain persons privilege to marry several scores of wives and to make holy matrimony a dishonourable traffic for money's sake ; it joins in

wedlock a man eighty years old with a girl hardly nine ; it forces many of the fair sex to perpetual celibacy or to virtual widowhood, and tempts many to a life of infamy, rendering the hymeneal altar a curse instead of a blessing. Premature marriages are not less mischievous. Experience has shown how they sap the foundation of the nation's health, and interfere with the nobler purposes of conjugal union. The forcible prohibition of the re-marriage of widows is simply an act of atrocious inhumanity, which is the more painful on account of the excruciating tortures and penances which Hindu widows are religiously forced to undergo under the penalty of the forfeiture of heaven. Not to speak of conscience, the very feelings of the nation ought to stand up to protest against this cruel custom. The countless restrictions which control marriage union and confine it not only within the membership of the same caste, and even within its minute and contracted divisions and sub-divisions, not only tend to keep up the system of caste, which is itself a great evil, but prevent the growth of the nation. They ought to be gradually set aside, and the fullest scope should be given to the important alliances upon which domestic happiness rests, by promoting inter-marriages between members of different castes, and the different races of India.

Fourthly, the Zenana requires thorough reform. On this point it is unnecessary to dilate, as you daily witness the miserable condition of your wives and sisters, your mothers and daughters ; you daily feel the wretchedness of your homes. And certainly nothing can be clearer to you than this, that so long as our females continue in their present degraded state, menials of the household, slaves of ignorance and superstition, and withal cyphers in society, the reformation of our country will be partial and

superficial Women's minds are powerful, powerful for propagating good as well as evil Do what you will to promote reformation, so long as errors and prejudices lodge in their minds they shall be perpetuated from generation to generation. While blessed with knowledge and refinement our females will establish and extend the kingdom of truth with more than missionary zeal ; and educated and dutiful mothers will achieve greater success in civilizing the country than all its schools and colleges. But apart from considerations of expediency, charity and justice imperatively demand that you should share with your wives and sisters the blessings of education. Remember that you have no right to treat them as outcasts of society, and deny them the precious advantages which you enjoy, and to which as God's children and possessed of immortal and responsible souls they too are fully entitled. Do full justice to their souls and rescue them from the thralldom of ignorance and superstition and their attendant evils. Illumine their minds with the light of sound and liberal education, admit them into rational intercourse with enlightened and virtuous companions ; above all let them join you in your daily worship of the True God. Thus our countrymen and women will walk hand in hand in the path of intellectual and moral advancement and thus as our social customs improve, enlightened and happy homes will be established as the sure basis of national prosperity and greatness.

Educated countrymen, here is a rough outline of your principal duties in connection with the reformation of your country. I know you will say it is an old stereo typed reform scheme. It is not intended, brethren, that you will grow wiser from perusal. I appeal to the conscience, not to the intellect of Young India : I offer no new theme for discussion or criticism, but a few simple well-known

truths for action. I beseech you to accept my appeal in this light and give it a practical response. Do not put it away from the individual and view it as entirely a thing of joint concern to be undertaken by an organised co-operative body. I appeal to you as individuals, not as a community ; I invite you individually to do your respective duties, in your respective spheres of life, and according to your means and opportunities, reforming yourselves, your families and those under your influence : and you may rest assured co-operation will necessarily follow. If a few earnest souls at least be ready to do their duty fearlessly and conscientiously, they will naturally co-operate with each other with cordial brotherly love, and may thus form eventually a powerful national reform alliance. Thus as individuals unite, may families co-work, may communities be formed, may cities and villages join together : may Young Bengal and Young Bombay, Young Madras and Young Punjab combine ; and may the circle gradually widen itself till it brings the whole nation within its embrace ! Then truth shall shine throughout the length and breadth of India and harmony reign among its vast population !

-

HARMONIOUS DEVELOPMENT

THE natural growth of the body means the harmonious and healthy development of all its component parts. The same remark applies to the soul. It is only when there is abnormal growth that we meet with anomalies, discord and the disproportionate development of certain parts at the expense of others. There seems to be a principle of unity in the root of our life, both physical and spiritual, which gives vitality, strength, consistency and beauty to all the elements of our being simultaneously, so that when they grow they grow together. But when the body gets diseased, the limbs, instead of preserving friendly relations towards each other, injure each other's health, and assume unnatural and unhealthy proportions. There is then discord between the heart and the lungs, the stomach and the brains, the nerves and the muscles. So when the soul is in an abnormal condition there is such disagreement among its various powers and sentiments, that instead of co-working for mutual development and common welfare, they seek to destroy or paralyze each other. Sometimes the intellect becomes too strong and tries to crush the tender feelings of the heart : a reaction follows, and surging emotions drown the impotent philosophy of the understanding and reason. The will again, in its turn, seeks to resent the attacks of the intellect and the feelings, and leads to actions at once unreasonable and heartless. Such conflicts and anomalies are to be found more or less in all men. They indicate the unhealthy and abnormal condition of the soul. In a healthy state the intellectual powers,

the feelings, and the will harmoniously develop themselves. In nature, the wise man can never be heartless ; nor the practical man unwise. In nature, impurity cannot abide with wisdom ; weakness and devotion cannot dwell together. In proportion to the culture of our intellect must be the growth of love and righteousness and the strength of our character. We are so constituted that no part of our spiritual nature can, in a normal condition, grow without effecting a corresponding improvement in all other parts of the system. The leaven of truth leaveneth the whole mass. Give the natural man faith, and it will imperceptibly raise the general tone of his character, enliven his feeling, exalt his aspirations, sweeten his devotion and strengthen his will. Should he grow in love he will inevitably grow in faith too ; should he become more earnest and strict in the discharge of his practical duties, he will necessarily become more prayerful and loving. Wisdom, love and purity are in their very nature and essence indissolubly united ; they dwell together and if they perish they perish together. Should it be found, as is generally the case in the world, that men who boast of theological wisdom have no heart, that those who are remarkably devout are not slow to adopt superstition and error, and that abundance of practical righteousness dries up the well of love in the heart, such wisdom, devotion and righteousness are by no means genuine ; they may be the results of our own labours, but are certainly not Divine gifts. In attempting to reform themselves men attain partial success ; they neglect one thing and fail in another they succeed in one thing and fail in another. Even when they seek to promote the harmonious development of their character by their own unaided exertions they fail through pride. But when we throw ourselves humbly and prayerfully at

the Father's feet, His grace works within us at the very root of our being, and gradually transforms our nature after the Divine image. There is a sort of reflection as it were of the light of God's nature in our lives ; His truth illumines our minds and gives us wisdom ; His love sweetens our hearts and quickens our love ; His holiness sanctifies our character. Thus in the natural course of development, wisdom, love and purity grow harmoniously in the human soul.

—

MARTHA AND MARY.

THE story of Martha and Mary, narrated in the Gospel of Christ, is not only interesting in itself, but suggests valuable reflections of a general character. The two sisters may be taken to represent two different classes of persons in the religious world. There are men of a practical order earnest and diligent in the discharge of their varied duties, patient, persevering and circumspect, ever doing something, and in spite of inconveniences and privations ever serving their brethren and God. Like Martha they are "cumbered about much serving;" they are "careful and troubled about many things." On the other hand, we find men of a devout and spiritual character, concerned more with things inward than with things outward, anxious only about faith and trust in the Lord, and ever engaged in gathering the secret treasures of the spirit which perish not. They have like Mary found "the one thing needful;" they have "chosen that good part which shall not be taken away" from them. It is easy to understand why Jesus commended Mary and approved of her choice, for of the two she chose the better and more lasting part of religion. Martha seemed to congratulate herself as being the more faithful and active servant, but Jesus gently pointed out her self-deception; in attending to many things she had missed "the one thing needful." How many among professed Theists commit this error, and delude themselves in this manner! They seek outward virtues at the expense of inward faith and peace. They try to be faithful servants without the

spirit of loyalty in their hearts. They are mindful of duty, but have no devotion. Their hands are dutiful, but their hearts are not in the Lord. Amidst abundance of good works and "much serving" they miss the real secret and essence of goodness and service. Their hearts are poor and beggarly, though they are clad in the costly vestments of outward righteousness. What makes their case more distressing is the pride which invariably accompanies their religion of good works. They presume there is merit in such works, and that the greater the number of their activities and exercises in the sphere of outward duty the nearer they are to the kingdom of heaven. Such woful delusion we ought to break up. We should believe that the purest kind of virtue, the most rigid, self-sacrificing and comprehensive order of philanthropy has no merit in the sight of God apart from faith, and that there is no justification in works. A man may be a good father, husband, brother, citizen : he may be a reformer and a patriot : the world will glorify him and praise his virtues and his noble deeds ; but his "much serving" will not avail to secure salvation in the absence of faith. It is not to be supposed, however, that we are commanded to abandon or ignore good works, and live in a state of contemplative quietism, of selfish mysticism. All that is meant is that we should not divide our heart among the endless diversities of good work, but seek with singleness of heart "the one thing needful," and all the rest will follow. We must cast out the pride of duty, the arrogance of "much serving," and cherish the humble spirit of faith. We must dedicate ourselves altogether to the feet of the Lord. and He will make us what we ought to be. True faith is not barren, it must bear fruit. It must manifest itself in the form of domestic and social duty. It must seek delight in doing good. That is not faith which loves

idleness, and refuses to serve God practically. His hands must ever serve the feet of the Lord whose heart is in the Lord. He who loves God and trusts in Him cannot but fulfil His commands with the utmost earnestness. His virtues are the spontaneous and natural issues of his faith. He does not go about doing this and that in his own wisdom and strength; but it is Divine grace that evolves from his faith and prayers the fruits of outward righteousness, and moves and regulates the whole machinery of his active virtues. He worketh righteousness only as a willing but humble instrument in the hands of God. He would shun the best work as godless into which he cannot carry the spirit of living and loving faith. Nay he would feel his hands palsied and wholly incapacitated from doing such works, for his hands draw their strength from the fatness of the heart, and can move only when they are moved by the spirit of faith. On the other hand, he will go to perform with the utmost alacrity what the world may regard as the meanest and the most degrading work should it bear the impress of Divine bidding. This is the spirit in which we should all labour in God's vineyard. Many of our Brahmo friends daily go to their respective offices, and tire out their energies by excessive labour; and why?—in order that with the profits of their labour they may supply the wants of their families and thus discharge the duties which they owe to them. But we ask them—do they feel comfort in such service? Do they enjoy after the day's work is done, the approbation of conscience for the performance of a sacred duty? Do they find that the more faithfully and energetically they labour the greater becomes their devotion to their Master? Alas! do they not on the contrary feel that it is the British Government, the railway company or the mercantile firm they serve and not God, and that in

performing their daily work they find they are doing something foreign to their soul, and instead therefore of finding any comfort in it they heartily dislike it and would fain give it up as an obstacle to spiritual progress? Why then this daily farce in the name of duty? Why spend the largest portion of your time and energy in godless drudgery, which far from helping hampers the spirit? Why mortify the soul for the sake of money, or ostensibly for the discharge of hollow duties? Again there are among us Brahmo reformers, school-masters, authors, managers of useful undertakings, preachers and missionaries, men who are in various ways seeking to do good to others. We would ask them whether they labour contentedly and devoutly, whether they always carry the holy presence of God about them, and feel that in each instance it is His behest they carry out. Do they not often complain their work maketh the heart dry, and that in proportion to their labour they do not feel themselves prayerful and loving towards God? Nay it sometimes happens that when they sit to pray after many hours' enthusiastic and self-sacrificing labour in a good cause, they find they cannot pray, work has so dried up their hearts. Against such godless though virtuous work we must warn the Brahmo community. It slowly and imperceptibly hardens the heart and induces unbelief and hypocrisy. It makes men Pharisees. Our Brahmo friends should be very careful about their so-called good works. Let them see "the one thing needful," and faith will beget righteousness. Let them do every good work in the name and under the eye of the Lord. As the Upanishads say, whatever they do they should consecrate unto God.

TRUE PRAYER.

WHATEVER other deficiencies we may have, let us not be wanting in earnestness in our daily prayers, for it is in our prayers that we hope to find the antidote for all our sins and weaknesses. There are many who pray regularly every day, but they unfortunately do not realize the fruits of prayer in their life. Nay there are some who have been praying systematically for the last ten years, and yet they complain that with all their prayers their evil habits have not been rectified, nor any of their spiritual wants supplied. Their devotion is little better than the repetition of stereotyped phrases, the dreary performance of a hard duty, whose termination alone is agreeable. So far have their prayers been inefficacious that they have been in the course of time led to doubt the importance and the necessity of prayer itself, and some have even been found to give it up eventually in a spirit of sceptical despondency. It is not difficult to account for this. Such men do not pray in the right spirit; they do not observe those conditions on which success invariably depends. It is not enough that we pray every day and are punctual church-goers; we must pray properly in order that we may receive what we pray for. It is not the length nor the number of our prayers but the true spirit of prayerful earnestness which ensures their successful issue. Prayer must be altogether real in order that its effects may be real. We should first endeavour to impress the heart with the supreme reality of Him to Whom we address our supplications. Nothing is of so great importance to devotion as the

realization of Divine Presence before and during prayer. Without a distinct consciousness of the presence of the Living Personal God before and within us, our prayers are apt to become empty appeals to the air, or the laboured soliloquies of the lonely dreamer. As soon as the mind is ushered into this Sacred Presence, a peculiar thrill is naturally felt throughout the soul, and even the hairs of the body often stand on end. Being thus assured that the Great God, is really near to hear us, we spontaneously open out the secrets of our troubled hearts, our wants and aspirations, our infirmities and maladies ; and all the time we feel that His all-seeing eye penetrates the depths of our minds, and sees every sin in its real colours. The communication being over we throw ourselves altogether upon His mercy and cling to His footstool as our only refuge. We earnestly and importunately implore Him to grant the suppliant's prayer, and look with anxious eyes towards Him that He may offer a benignant response. At last the glances of His loving eyes shed forth a flood of serene and pure light into our souls. The more we yield to this influence our prayer, which at first was a mere asking, rises into sweeter and deeper communion with God, till we are so completely charmed with the pleasant light of His company that the very thought of separation becomes painful. Every prayer must conclude with something actually obtained, and with the glad hope of obtaining greater and richer blessings in future. Such is natural prayer. Let us judge our daily prayers by such criterion, and satisfy ourselves that we do not address our words for an hour or two to empty space, but that we actually feel first the reality of our Father's presence, and then the sweetness and purity of His company. That is true prayer which saves us from sin and sufferings and gives us purity and peace.

MAN AS A TEACHER.

THE standard of purity may be described as a circle, the upper half of which is Divine, and the lower half human. We are taught to look up to God as the highest and truest standard of purity which we must ever strive to realize. "Be perfect." However sinful and degraded we may be, we must be guided by the great principle involved in this exhortation. The very idea of man aspiring to the perfection of the divinity may at first seem audacious and foolish as being an attempt at impossibilities. But closely considered the above text will be found to contain the wisdom of ages, as it teaches us to turn away from the inadequate and demeaning examples of human character, and direct the aspirations and energies of the immortal soul towards the Infinite and Perfect God. We cannot, however, do away with man's teaching and guidance. The help of the elder brethren of the human family has in all countries and ages been considered indispensable to the progress of the younger members, and therefore invariably sought and availed of by the latter for the benefit of their souls. Not only has their superior wisdom exalted them to the position of teachers, but what is of more importance, their purer lives have been universally recognised as patterns of character for our imitation and guidance. How then are these two principles to be reconciled? How are we to accept both God and man as the standard of excellence? The very same religion which tells men to be perfect even as God is perfect, points to Christ as "the way." There must be a deep meaning in

this—a real unity beneath this seeming contradiction. The fact, as we understand it, is this. Though thousands believe that God alone is absolutely holy and that whenever they seek holiness they must look up to Him as their standard, yet in endeavouring to serve Him they feel the need of a lower standard which, if followed, may guide them to him ; and hence is it that they have recourse to man. What holiness is in itself we see in God, though dimly, according to our weak vision. But how we are to become holy servants of God we try to learn from the personal character of good and righteous men. We worship God as the Supreme Master, the Kind Father, the Righteous Governor. We revere good and great men as obedient servants, dutiful children and loyal subjects. We cannot expect to find in the Divinity an example of the way in which He is to be served ; so we can never without being guilty of idolatry bow before man as the perfect standard of holiness. Man, however righteous his character may be, and however exalted above ordinary men, can commend himself to us only as exemplifying the character of an *obedient servant*, and can never be identified with God, who stands before us as the One Only *Master*, full of perfect holiness. Thus in Theism the indisputable sovereignty and unity of God as the Holy Master is acknowledged, and the proper functions of man as a helper in His service are recognised, while man-worship is rendered impossible. Hence in revering Christ as the ‘ way ’ to God the Theists only show their appreciation of the spirit of one who lived to “ do the will ” of his Father, and who has taught us by his personal example how we may do the like. They honour his memory not because he shows,—for he cannot show,—what the Father is, but how the ‘ son ’ ought to be dutiful and obedient to the Father. The son is

needful only as exhibiting the lower half of the circle of righteousness, which is obedience. The Father alone shows the upper half—purity as it is, and as it can exist only in God.

DIVINE MERCY AND HOLINESS.

THE Divine nature is a beautiful and consistent unity. But when we reflect on that nature we do so analytically. We think of the power of God, His wisdom, His mercy, His holiness separately, in order that we may have a clear apprehension of each. In conception we again combine these attributes synthetically, and try to realize God as a Person possessed of these attributes. Such conception of the Divine nature must be false and delusive and even injurious to the interests of the soul, if we omit or underrate any of the above attributes. We must carefully guard ourselves against this evil. In prayer and meditation we must feel the Real God as He is, and be satisfied that we have not imagined or argued away any of his attributes. There are many who instead of adoring the true God offer their homage and prayers to a being whom they imagine to be God, and who best answers to their ideas and wishes. They virtually worship an ideal projection of their own minds, and by ascribing to the imagined deity whatever attributes they wish it to possess they actually follow their own whims while professing to follow their deity. False theology often produces errors in religion and even in morality. There are men who think of God's mercy apart from His holiness to such an extent as almost to ignore the latter ; while others there are who on the contrary take such one-sided view of His holiness as almost to forget

that He is merciful. Nay the same man may entertain these partial and contrary views of the Divine nature at different times. The practical consequences of such theological one-sidedness are often deplorable, and become seriously hurtful when they assume a definite shape. He who reflects too much on God's mercy to the exclusion of holiness, prays fervently, hopes sanguinely and communes with God joyfully ; but at the same time he thinks very little of his sins, does not care to part with his old habits of vice or fortify his soul against its further encroachments, hates repentance as a disease, and shuns all gloomy thoughts. He, on the other hand, who looks almost exclusively to divine holiness feels more and more by contrast the wretchedness of his own soul, finds hardly any cause of rejoicing, learns to be humble and God-fearing ; but becomes gradually hopeless of reconciliation with the All-holy, and may ultimately pronounce himself irreclaimable. Thus there is great danger in either case ; and though there is too much joy on the one hand and too much sorrow on the other, both produce eventually the same evils,—they afford encouragement to sin and slacken our efforts after the attainment of purity. By taking advantage, as it were of God's mercy, or of our own weakness and frailties, we neglect our sins. By believing either that God is too merciful to punish our sins, which are only improprieties in His indulgent view, or that our nature is too wicked to be purified, we naturally cling to our vicious habits and become indifferent to the purification of our hearts. Then does the soul attain harmony when by an adequate conception of God's mercy and holiness it blends rejoicings and repentance. In true prayer and communion, the presence of the Father of infinite mercy infuses joy and hope into our hearts, while that of the Holy God teaches us humility and purity ; the former serves

as a safeguard against despair and scepticism, the latter against pride and impurity. Let us not then imagine a deity possessed only of infinite mercy or absolute holiness, but worship the Real God who is infinite both in mercy and holiness.

THE PROPHET OF NUDDEA.

To the Brahmo Somaj must India be ever indebted for the vindication and revival of the spirit of Chaitanya, and the true appreciation of his creed and character. The short period of four centuries has seen the rise and decay of that important and interesting branch of the Hindu Church which he founded, and which, though now in a degenerated condition, has done wonders in its days, and will, if revived and reformed, yet render valuable services to the cause of Indian regeneration. While we sincerely regret that his spirit has so soon passed away from the vast majority of his followers, leaving them in a most abject condition of formalism and even immorality, we cannot but speak with the utmost reverence and gratitude of him who achieved some of the highest religious and social reforms in Hindu society, and whose true-hearted disciples are an honour to Hindustan. That the great prophet of Nuddea should be ridiculed, hatred and traduced by those who look to the surface of his movement is not to be wondered at. Fancy a promiscuous gathering of various castes, chiefly of the lower orders, enthusiastically dancing and whirling round, chanting common-place hymns set in low popular tunes, and now and then fervently crying aloud "Haribol." Such a spectacle is disgusting and even ludicrous in the eyes of educated men, and

revolting to enlightened ideas and tastes. And there are many who have not the patience to hear any argument in justification of a creed which tolerates such things. We can very well understand the aversion of such superficial observers to Chaitanyism. But those "who seek for pearls must dive below." A careful analysis will show that this system of faith involves certain valuable principles, which far from exciting ridicule, challenge the respect of even the best among us, being of the highest importance to our salvation and to the social reformation of our country. Chaitanya proscribed caste, and boldly preached the equality of Brahmin and Sudra; he protested against the merit of work and wisdom, and told his followers that salvation cometh by grace; he denounced worldliness and taught faith and resignation. These three principles constitute the corner stone of his creed—the equality of all castes before God, salvation through grace, and faith or *Bhakti*. The best and boldest illustration of the first of these doctrines is to be found in the fact that one of the most devoted of Chaitanya's disciples was a Mahomedan convert named Haridas, whose memory is highly revered even by the Hindus of the present day without any scruple whatsoever. It is hardly less noteworthy that among Chaitanya's followers the highest Brahmin and the lowest Sudra or Chandal, join in adoring their deity, and even in many cases dine together and intermarry. What more do our most advanced reformers of the present day wish? Do we not see here an attempt to level caste distinctions, and construct a spiritual and social brotherhood such as our most enlightened ideas lead us to wish? And when we consider that such an attempt was made by an orthodox Hindu, brought up amidst the grossest traditions of caste and in the dark ages of Brahminical ascendancy, we cannot sufficiently admire

and revere him. But his crusade against caste would appear insignificant when compared with the far higher battle he fought with the pride of works. He found the true spirit of religion had been almost stamped out under the crushing weight of theological formularies on the one hand and outward ceremonials on the other. Men were arrogantly seeking to save themselves by means of their theological erudition ; or were trying to purchase redemption with the merit of pious actions and pompous ceremonies. Chaitanya dispelled this delusion, and emphatically taught that nothing could save sinners except the Almighty name of God and His all-conquering grace. Hence the pre-eminent importance his followers attach to the Divine Name, and the " ocean of joy " which the best among them feel in that sweet name. Nay none is reckoned his true disciple unless the very utterance of that name drives away his sin and inundates his heart with heavenly felicity. Lastly, our countrymen owe to him the highest ideas of simplicity, resignation and trust, which no other Hindu reformer taught so well by precept or example. His followers have learnt to repose their firmest faith in God and resign the morrow into the hands of Providence. They discard worldly luxuries, rigidly abstain from meat and wine, live on the bare necessities of life, and think it honourable to depend upon charity if they could thereby dedicate their life to God. Such are the leading principles of Chaitanyaism. However much they may have been abused in the course of time, they are noble in themselves, and make the nearest approach to the ethics of Jesus of Nazareth. It is our conviction that should India fully accept and act upon these principles, she will unconsciously imbibe the regenerating spirit of the Gospel, and in a national manner realize the " Kingdom of Heaven."

REPENTANCE AND JOY.

IF Theism be, as we have often observed, the religion of harmony, it must neither incline to despondency and melancholy on the one hand nor rapture and ecstasy on the other. It is the religion of patience and peace ; it unites wholesome sorrow with joy. Many there are who are not alive to the enormity of sin, and regard it as nothing more than a slip, a mistake, an imperfection ; they obliterate from their theology what we call " horrid iniquity." Though depraved they sport wantonly with their vices, and, in spite of these, enjoy raptures in devotion. According to them religion is nothing but perpetual happiness, and their fancy creates an elysium into which their hearts soar during communion and contemplation, revelling in the highest flights of imagined felicity. Self-destroying Neroes, they fiddle and make themselves merry while their souls burn in a terrible conflagration of sin. There are, on the other hand, men who are ever and anon tormenting themselves with reminiscences of their past sins, and with exaggerated and painful ideas of their own abasement. Sinful as they are, they seem to argue, their religion can only mean sackcloth and mourning. They magnify their sins into a gigantic monster which haunts them day and night, takes away their cheerfulness and comfort, and depresses their spirits as to bring about ultimately a settled state of utter despair and self-mortification. In neither of these two classes of men do we find the true spirit of faith. The Theist deals with realities, not with fancies ; he neither dwells in an imaginary heaven nor in an imaginary hell. He sees there is actual sin in his heart, and he feels sorrow and repentance for it. Nay repentance come to him naturally, as uneasiness follows bodily distemper. He cannot ignore it. He cannot will it away, much

less rejoice in. But such penitence is proportionate to the acuteness of the spiritual malady which induces it. In the natural state of the mind it can neither be too little nor too much. The fact is that the mortifying feelings of self-condemnation consequent on the violation of God's law are, like other emotions, not dependent upon our will ; they do not rise or disappear, increase or decrease in poignancy at our fiat. We feel them in their due measure, because compelled to do so under the law of nature. Thus the soul in a normal condition is prevented from reducing its sin through imagination to the zero point, and also magnifying it into horrid proportions. The sinner may feel depressed, but he cannot sink into absolute and hopeless depression. Such a depression is prevented by a consciousness of the fair side of his life. If he feels there is evil in him, he cannot but feel on the other hand there is something good in him ; and if sorrow is, as a consequence, inevitable, joy too is inevitable. Neither purity nor impurity is absolute in humanity. However wicked man may be, there must yet be some goodness within him. If there is in our biography much to deplore and repent for, there is also some matter for self-gratulation and thanksgivings to God. Though we are prone to evil, through Divine mercy we have now and then been saved from sin and sorrow and enabled to attain purity. We have often been thrown away from His presence by our conscious rebellion against His authority ; but now and then humbly have we knelt beneath His foot-stool, and enjoyed the sweet, invigorating and purifying influence of His presence and of conscious communion with Him. Such facts gladden us not only when we realize them but also as often as we recollect them. God's mercy unto us, great sinners though we are, is an undoubted fact ; and this mercy is manifested as well in guarding

us against sin as in conferring positive spiritual blessings upon us. All such merciful dispensations comfort and cheer us, and the more so by their contrast with the surrounding black spots with which we have defiled our hearts. In short as we feel mortified at the sins we have committed, we rejoice in the rays of light, purity and love which Divine grace has shed upon us from time to time. Such rejoicings are natural, and when natural cannot degenerate into the dreamer's visionary ecstasies or the mystic's nervous excitement or the wanton merriment of the unconscious sinner. They cannot overstep legitimate bounds so long as they are based upon and arise from actual facts of our life we shall find reasons both for sorrow and joy. And as we grow in purity our sorrows shall decrease and our joys shall increase proportionately.

THE LAW OF FORGIVENESS.

IF forgery is counted a most heinous crime in earthly tribunals, to forge divine documents must be awfully iniquitous. And yet not a few there are who systematically commit this sin. Thousands, nay tens of thousands, of all creeds use as genuine Divine law a counterfeit ethical code forged by themselves, and while pretending to follow Heaven's behests actually carry out the wishes of their own carnal hearts. The fact is that pure and unmixed truth as it is in God can hardly secure currency in this world's market and is therefore mixed with base metal. Men find it so difficult to obey God's law in its integrity and fullness, that they think it indispensable to curtail and modify it, so as to bring it down to the level of their own limited capacities, and adapt it in

every way to their weaknesses and difficulties. But they do not stop here. They not only hold that this mutilation of Divine law is necessary to suit human convenience, but that it is intended and sanctioned by God. Frail and weak as man is, and surrounded by trials and temptations too strong for him to resist, God in the plenitude of His wisdom and mercy has decided that it is not obligatory on him to obey the whole of His law, but that he may fulfil it as far as he is able and willing ! Thus although it is universally acknowledged that the primary 'statue law' of heaven enjoins absolute veracity, honesty, benevolence, devotion and faith, yet according to the 'common law' prevalent for ages among mankind, and said to be tacitly sanctioned by Him, men may lie now and then, be a little dishonest, do a small act of cruelty to others, be somewhat idle and careless in prayer and even cherish sceptical views, under the pressure of trials and difficulties. Thus God's truth is dead letter ; man's mixture of truth and lie, purity and impurity is what practically governs the affairs of society. We propose to apply these remarks to the subject of the present essay. It is theoretically believed on the one hand that we should be absolutely meek and forgiving, that we ought to turn the right cheek when the left is struck, return good for evil, bless them that curse us and pray for them that despitefully use us. But this beautifully and high-sounding theory is set aside in the actual concerns of life ; and men act and live under the conviction that it is necessary and intended by God that they should now and then, under the impulses of anger and resentment, return blow for blow. If they are vindictive, they do not even confess that they are wrong, much less penitently adopt measures of reformation. On the contrary they proudly seek to defend their conduct, and hold retaliation to be

justifiable. It is argued that if every man were to submit meekly to all the insults and oppression to which he might be subjected, and forgive his enemy repeatedly, human society would be ruined, and wrong-doers would carry on their oppressions with impunity. Hence anger and resentment are said to be necessary for the safety and welfare of society, and not repugnant to God's will ! Nay the meek and forgiving are ridiculed and maligned as timid and weak-hearted men. The word Lamb which denotes gentle Christ, is in this world of wolves synonymous with cowardice. "An eye for an eye," recrimination and retaliation, revilings and slander these constitute manliness. The sooner one overpowers his enemy the more honourable he is. The more he pities and forgives his foe the more contemptible and mean he is. As if true manhood consists in the gratification of the passions of anger and vindictiveness ! We abhor this base accommodation of divine law to the promptings of the flesh. We deem it iniquitous to fashion a maxim after our own interests and wishes, and then pass it off as divine. If we cannot control our anger and are driven into vindictive retaliation by carnal excitement, shall we seek to justify it by falsely pleading God's approval of it ? Shall we instead of confessing our own imperfections and impurity impute the same to the sacred law of heaven ? No : let this impious fraud and forgery be put down, Let us acknowledge our guilt, and vindicate the purity of God's law. The law of meekness and forgiveness is absolute like all other ethical laws ; if it is to be obeyed, it must be accepted in its integrity. "Seventy times seven" is no arithmetical limit to the unlimited scope of true forgiveness ; seven hundred and seventy times seven would be as inadequate to represent it. We must forgive as often as we are abused and

insulted, without limit or reservation. In other words, the heart must be wholly and constantly meek in spite of repeated causes of irritation. Our anger must be so far subdued that our very nature may be converted into that of a lamb. True meekness cannot, however sorely it may be tried, give up its lamb-like nature, but is in all circumstances gentle, mild and forgiving, —ever softly serene as the moon. God requires of us absolute meekness, forgiveness unto perfection ; not mere sentimentalism or mildness of temper, not temporary reconciliation, not mere kindness towards the weaknesses of friends. He commands us to be forbearing and forgiving towards our worst foes, and under the most trying provocation. He demands of us not only cessation of anger but positive love and kindness towards even our oppressors and enemies. Such is the high standard of meekness by which we ought to be guided. It is absurd and blasphemous to talk of the All-holy giving His sanction to all those outrages and assaults which our vindictiveness gives rise to. He has implanted in us feelings of anger and indignation for the purpose of protecting others from wrongs and oppressions, and upholding the cause of truth and humanity, not of avenging personal wrongs, inflicted on ourselves. We must feel indignation when we see the innocent, the weak, the poor and the helpless unjustly harassed and tortured, the virtuous maligned and persecuted, the innocent punished or public good wantonly sacrificed ; for under such an impulse we are incited to help the injured cause with fitting zeal. To remain callous and not to feel indignation in such circumstances, would be unnatural and immoral. But we have no right to convert those passions which are only meant to be safeguards of public good into personal vindictiveness and revenge. We can never resent wrongs on our own account. We may do all to defend ourselves

from assault and oppression ; but against the most inveterate foe we should not, we dare not lift the voice of malice or the hand of vengeance. If we are maltreated in the worst manner, slandered, beaten and robbed, we should seek redress and protection, but not revenge. We should forgive our worst foes, and pray that the Father may have mercy on them.

OUR RESTING PLACE.

THERE are many among us who are searching after a resting place. They may have attained a large measure of purity in doctrine, devotion and deeds ; but their varying habits and dispositions and tendencies, and the constant fluctuations in their religious life, both inward and outward, show that they have not found rest or peace. Drifted to and fro by trials and struggles, doubt and despondency, they seem to be seeking a place where they may find rest. Until such a resting place is found no Brahmo should consider himself safe. There is no security even in abundant righteousness ; even the best among us may turn out unbelievers to-morrow. For of what avail is a house with unspeakable riches inside, and apparently strong, well-built and beautiful, which has no foundation ? It is of the utmost importance, therefore, to fix the roots of our faith and piety in a rock, that we may stand firm and unshaken amidst the trials of life and enjoy peace undisturbed. But where is that resting place ? Not in ceremonies or doctrines ; not in our wisdom or actions ; not in our imagination or emotions ; not in external objects however sublime or prophets however pious and holy. No, neither in any thing in ourselves nor in any thing outward ; but in the footstool of the Merciful Lord. There

alone must we seek, there alone can we hope to find true peace. All else is treacherous and delusive. Beautiful objects and plausible theories may satisfy our imagination, but they deceive and disappoint us if we wholly trust them. But though often deceived we still pursue the profitless game, and try the deceitful experiment once more, till we come at last to the true resting place—God's infinite mercy. When we have reposed our firm faith in that, our doubts and wanderings cease, and our troubled hearts rejoice in the prospect and possession of peace. Let us all with unwavering hearts rely on God's emphatic promise made unto each of us in the recesses of our hearts—*I will give you peace*. This promise shall be redeemed in the case of each of us, however unworthy we may be. This is at once our hope and comfort, our life and strength, our resting place amidst the fluctuations of the world. There is nothing else which we can depend upon with absolute confidence. The least failure unnerves and discourages us; the smallest speck of cloud in the spiritual horizon excites serious apprehension; the occasional lapses of good men tell us, we too may prove wanting in the hour of trial; our own experiences of the endless ups and downs of life make us fear our highest flights may be succeeded by an ignominious fall. To-day we are prayerful and virtuous; but to-morrow perchance the worst form of wickedness will overtake us. Thus there is certainty of rest neither in possession nor in anticipation so long as we depend upon ourselves. Nay sometimes men are even led to conclude that it is circumstances which make and unmake piety, so that religious pursuits are an altogether uncertain game, and our virtues but splendid visions. Amidst the ceaseless vicissitudes, struggles and uncertainties of our spiritual life, and in the face of threatening passions and lusts what it is that can

keep us steady and assure us of salvation ? In this land of sin and death where can we find assurance that we shall live and not die ? In the vast sea of disasters where is the rock to which the sinner may cling for life and eternity ? When the whole world preaches in varied forms sermons of despair is there no gospel of hope ? Yes ; sinner, listen, thy Father saith—“ *I will give you rest.*” It is no uncertain language. The Father’s holiness and love preclude the possibility of any thing like deception or fraud. That He saith that He doeth surely. The above words are a Promissory Note, indelibly impressed on the human heart in God’s own handwriting, which shall be redeemed in the fullness of time. The treasure therein guaranteed is as good as when actually in hand. The direst revolutions may occur, the sun and the stars may pass away, but not one iota of God’s promise shall remain unfulfilled. Whoever hath received the promise shall assuredly find the treasure—peace here and hereafter. In the money market of this world we put our faith in the frail Promissory Notes of man as if they were cash ; and daily we carry on our transactions with confidence. Blessed are they who put absolute trust in the promise of the All-holy and find rest and peace therein ; who not only rejoice in the hope of its fulfilment, but regard the promise itself as actual treasure ! If then the Holy Father has made unto us an emphatic promise that He will give us rest, let us fling away all unholy fear and despondency, and with hope and patience lie waiting at His feet. Let the world frighten us, let difficulties and trials beset us ; yet let us remain firm and unmoved, and rest assured of eternal life and peace everlasting, for the Father hath promised unto us these things.

BEWARE OF TRIALS.

AS in the physical world, so in our spiritual life there are such things as ebb and flow, day and night. There are times when men enjoy spiritual prosperity, when they can pray profitably and pleasantly, and live righteously, and when all outward circumstances also prove favourable to their wishes. At other times spiritual energies, joys and even hopes seem to ebb away, and discouragement, disappointments, trials and temptations continually trouble and mortify the spirit. These are bad days for the soul, and it requires great strength to meet them and pass through them unscathed. None should neglect such seasons of trial when they come. None should arrogantly imagine that his present spiritual prosperity is guaranteed to endure everlastingly and is above the possibility of depression. For then his heart unfortified would easily fall a prey to dangers which it was not prepared to encounter. True wisdom counsels us to be always prepared for the worst. It ought to be borne in amind that our character depends greatly upon the trials which now and then beset us, and that it is these which determine our future career. Not to be able to stand against them when they come is often the beginning of a downward course of ever increasing unbelief and vice. How many men, once so good and prayerful, have slipped off the path of purity and sunk in the mire of immorality for once failing to stand in the day of trial ! How often has one such lapse resulted in a series of recurring and almost inevitable failings bringing down the most mighty and the least suspected to utter ruin ! How many of our friends, proudly and gaily sailing under the sun on the smooth sea of a pious life, have been suddenly overtaken by a dismal and stormy night, and completely wrecked ! Such examples ought to

teach us to prepare ourselves for the occasional reverses and trials of life, to lay up provisions for the evil day. Let the best of men remember that their spiritual resources and health and strength may be taken away by temptations never even dreamt of, and that they should therefore be always prepared to encounter such contingencies. To be forewarned is to be forearmed. Our success in trial depends mainly upon our preparedness. Our best exertions during trial often fail and prove inadequate, and only they win the battle who were previously trained and disciplined for it. Sin often comes upon us like fever, and the best antidote has been found to be strengthening and purifying the system during remission or before the disease is expected to come ; for when it has come, the system being unprepared, is hardly able to withstand its attack and readily succumbs to it. We would therefore recommend all our friends who think they stand to take heed lest they fall. If they feel they have at present strength, purity and faith, and joy in prayer, let them not rest satisfied ; but try with God's help to increase these to such an extent that the soul may not have to starve wholly when the evil day comes. There may be rise and fall ; increase and decrease ; but the soul must, amidst all such fluctuations, maintain an unvarying and constant quantity of piety and faith. There may be ebb and flow ; but the stream of spiritual life must never dry up. There must always be a sufficient fund of spiritual resources, which though reduced in seasons of scarcity will suffice to help us to survive all trials. Thus raptures may be followed by sorrow, but there must always be contentment ; wisdom may make way for ignorance, but faith must abide ; enthusiasm may subside into indifference, but hope must not die away ; instead of plenty may come want, but competence there must always be. Yester-

day we shed tears of love and joy and enjoyed profound communion with God during prayer ; to-day the mouth prays but the heart is in the world and feels no interest or joy in devotion. In such cases we must be satisfied that though prayer be cheerless, it is addressed to the Real God through faith. In short we should always see that though the outward manifestations of religious life indicate great changes, its root is never affected or suffered to wither ; there may now be joy and then sorrow, but life should be steady. If any trial directly or indirectly sap the foundations of spiritual life, and affect our faith and hope, then is danger to be apprehended. Such danger does not at first appear serious, because the evil insidiously and imperceptibly corrodes the vitals of the soul, and many therefore carelessly or proudly neglect the first symptoms, and within a year or two lose their faith altogether and become apostates. Such cases may be found among us, and we need not seek illustrations at a distance to caution our Brahmo friends. Not a few Brahmos after passing through fluctuations and trials have at last become despairing sceptics, and have been found to carp at those very doctrines of faith, self-sacrifice and prayer, which they once so highly valued and practised, and to vilify those men and institutions they once sincerely honoured. Such perils await all who neglect the vital springs of their souls—faith and hope—and allow these to be affected by every outward change of circumstances. If they wish to outlive all changes and reverses, which are inevitable, they ought to see that even when all outward circumstances combine against them and make the spirit weak, hard, gloomy and fretful, the pulse of hope still beats, and the heart of faith still throbs. And in order that vitality may endure through such trials two things are necessary ;—the least indication of declining faith or hope

should make us run to the Lord for immediate protection ; and secondly, in seasons of prosperity surplus resources should be reserved to meet future contingencies. In summer lay up provisions for the winter. Nourish the system while it is day that you may not starve during the night. Be ever ready and armed that the foe may not take you by surprise.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST.

THERE is an infinite diversity of opinions among Indian Theists respecting Jesus of Nazareth, ranging from intense hatred on the one hand to profound reverence and personal attachment on the other. Not a few there are who look upon him with almost the same spirit of sectarian antipathy and abhorrence as Hindus, and even go to the length of calling him an impostor. Such ideas are happily dying out. The vast majority of our brethren of the liberal school cherish respect and gratitude towards Christ, and some even accept him as a guide and master. We have no desire to enter into a theological controversy on this subject, but we think it necessary to say a few words to point out the manner in which we accept Christ so as to make him unto us not a source of wranglings and disputes, but of life, strength and righteousness. We, Theists must take it to be foreign to our purpose to canvass the thousand theories which have been propounded about him and his creed ; but surely it is our interest and duty to receive from him that healthy moral influence which he is appointed in God's economy to exercise on the world, to love him and revere him and follow his teachings and example. We must remember that there is a bodily Christ and a spiritual Christ, a local Christ and a

universal Christ, a dead Christ and a living Christ. Orthodox Christians may deal with the former and seek revelation and salvation in the visible and tangible incidents of the Christ that was. But our business is with the spiritual, universal and living Christ. What shall we do with the *body*? We want the *spirit*. Not the son of man but the son of God in Christ is needful for our salvation. In the purely human Christ we can hardly feel any interest; but the divine elements of his character come home to every "man's bosom and business," and are of the highest importance to our redemption as involving the eternal and universal principles of ethics. By Christ we mean not the person bearing that name, not his form and flesh, but the spirit he embodied,—the spirit of faith, love, righteousness and sacrifice of which he was unquestionably a noble impersonation. We always attach to him this significance; we look upon him in this light; we try to imitate and follow him as such. He does not come to us as God, the Father, Ruler and Saviour, in human form; he is not an advocate or intercessor striving to appease an angry deity; he does not present himself to us as an external fact to be believed on historical testimony; nor is he to us a mere good man who lived a pious life and died a noble death. Christ stands before us always as an incarnation of faith and loyalty to God, an example of self-sacrificing devotion to truth; he is to be accepted in spirit and converted into an internal fact of our life; he is to live in us perpetually as the spirit of godliness. We do not care to 'believe' in the outward and dead Nazarene, or make a declaration of such belief in an orthodox style. But we do care to assimilate the spirit of Christ to our souls. We must eat the flesh and drink the blood of the spiritual Christ, and thus incorporate into our spiritual constitution the principles of faith and sacrifice, love

and obedience which he embodied. Thus the spirit of Christ shall constantly abide in us as the living Christ ; thus instead of adoring him or praying to him we shall ever strive to enter into deeper communion with his spirit, and to advance nearer and nearer to the Infinite Father with the spirit of that holy brother's faith and love growing within us.

SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE.

THE chief philosophical difference between the creed of the Brahmo Somaj and other creeds will appear on analysis to be nothing more than the old difference between the subjective and the objective. Brahmoism deals mainly with subjective realities. All other creeds deal more or less with objective realities and visible rites. Take the idea of God. All forms of faith from the grossest fetichism to the most refined type of idolatry and incarnation-worship are but attempts to see and adore a material and visible deity. Unable to realize the Unseen Spirit, unable to believe, love or serve One whom the senses fail to reach, men have in all ages longed for a visible deity in the heavens above, on the earth below or in the depths of the sea. It is this irrepressible longing which explains the vast and varied pantheon of false divinities worshipped by different sects in ancient and modern times. Under its impulses men have made images of wood and stone, of metal and clay, or bowed before trees, reptiles and four-footed animals, or offered homage to heroes, martyrs and saints. Christianity, in which perhaps the most rational attempt has been made to gratify this longing, seeks only a visible *manifestation* of the Divine Spirit in Christ Jesus ; though of course it must be admitted

that orthodoxy identifies him who manifests with Him who is manifested, the finite reflection with the Infinite Light. This desire of materializing religion shows itself not only in worship, but likewise in matters of revelation, atonement and future life. Men cannot read the unseen words of wisdom and salvation inscribed on the tablet of the heart and the pages of the volume of nature, and they want a visible revelation of Divine counsel written by God's own hand and impressed on paper with printer's ink. Hence the Vedas, the Bible and the Koran. Men cannot wipe off the accumulated iniquities of the heart, and find their warfare with secret sins and deadly spiritual foes hopelessly ineffective; they therefore devise outward methods of purification. Pilgrimages, sacrifices, ablutions, recitations of sacred texts, intercessory prayers and external ceremonies have been the consequence. So also with regard to the great 'hereafter.' The human mind carries the gross ideas of matter even beyond the grave, and fondly descries through the vista of hope mansions of gold, translucent with heaven's light, and gardens breathing ambrosial odours, and fountains from which sweet nectar doth perennially flow. All this paraphernalia of materialistic theology—highly gratifying to the senses, imposing, grand and loveable—is a shadow and an unreality in the estimation of a Theist. His God, his revelation, his expiatory rites, his heaven are all spiritual. He does not ignore matter. He does not deny its uses. There is much in the visible world before us which can and does exercise the most beneficial moral influence on us, Scriptures and prophets are invaluable teachers, and woe be to him who dishonours them! But it is alike unphilosophical and superstitious to identify them with our salvation. Between outward truth and truth in the heart as an actual possession there is a vast gulf;

and the question is how it is to be bridged. To touch a book full of wisdom is not to grow wise ; to bow before a saint is not to become saintly. There may be a hundred lights shining before us, each bright as the sun : but we are blind and see them not. Grant that the scriptures are perfect and that saints are perfect ; the perverted heart appreciates them not, and " all looks yellow to the jaundiced eye." Objective purity is not subjective purity. A good book and a prophet are useless unless the heart is turned by God Himself to discern truth and goodness. The Theist looks upon all scriptures and prophets as partial aids to devotion and sanctification, but believes that the light which saves cometh into the heart from God Himself. The heart must first be quickened by the direct action of the Holy Spirit before it can understand or accept anything good in the outside world. True revelation is the subjective light that lighteth the soul not the objective book that is dark—not the letter that killeth. True salvation is the actual purification of our inner life, not the recognition of purity in an outward object or being.

THE LOVE OF MAN.

NEVER was the doctrine of the love of man so emphatically set forth as in the following imperishable words of John which occur in his first epistle :—" If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar : for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen ? " Here the severest condemnation is pronounced upon those who while pretending to love God hate their brethren. They are set down as liars and hypocrites, and their boasted love of God a lie.

The love of the visible brother is declared to be essential to the love of the invisible Father. However deficient we may be in our practical fidelity to this excellent doctrine, none can venture to dispute its ethical correctness. Our own experiences verify the truth of it to the very letter ; we feel it in our dealings with the world. But the truth is deeper than at first meets the eyes ; it involves more than many are perhaps inclined to admit. They would accept it in a general sense without the slightest scruple, but they are not prepared to carry it out in all its bearings. Like many other ethical maxims it is readily accepted as a seed-principle, but thousands recoil from its more fully developed forms. Let us then analyze the doctrine before us to evolve its full significance. It embodies two principles,—the Love of God and the love of man, and shows the connection between them. To comprehend these properly it is necessary to remember that our relation to a brother arises from and is dependent upon our relation to a father, and that the sentiments and feelings incident to these relations are held together by indissoluble natural bonds. Children born of the same father must feel fraternal feelings and sympathise towards each other because of their common parentage. Their mutual brotherhood is the natural consequence of a common Fatherhood. So it is with us as children of God. Our relation to each other as brothers is not an arbitrary relation, nor has it any existence in itself ; it exists and must exist because of our relation to God as our common Father. If it is true that He is our Creator, Preserver and Father, it necessarily follows that we are fraternally related towards each other. The recognition of the former relation necessitates that of the latter. We cannot admit the one without admitting the other. The two must go hand in hand—the love of God as Father and the love of man as brother.

That a man should love his brother man without loving his God is as impossible as it is to love God without loving man. Show us a man who hates and dishonours his neighbours, it is absolutely certain, let him say what he likes to the contrary, that he does not love God as his Father ; what he prides himself on as the love of God is a self-deception, mere morbid sentimentalism. Whoso has learned to love God as his Father must unavoidably, under the impulse of natural feelings, look upon each of His children as his own brother, and try to love him and serve him as such. He who is true to his Father must be true to all the children of that Father. That man is therefore a ' liar ' who says—I love God, and yet hateth his brother. So far the doctrine under consideration is quite clear and indisputable, and we need not dilate on it at greater length. It is further said or implied in the context of the doctrine we are discussing, that he who does not love his brother *cannot* love God. The argument may be more fully stated thus,—He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen cannot possibly love his Father whom he hath not seen ; in other words, the love of brother man is an indispensable means towards the attainment of the love of God. Religious progress is like climbing up a ladder, advancing step by step. In order to reach the higher step we must pass the lower one, or we cannot reach the former by any means,—there is no advance *per saltum*. We must pass through all intermediate stages of progress, gradually and in regular order, before we can enter the kingdom of God. He who neglects the means must miss the aim, he who does not pass through the first stage must find it a hopeless task to reach the second ; his boastful ideas and ambitious projects must meet with discomfiture. Whoever therefore says he loves God, and yet has no love for his brother, tells a ' lie,' and talks

of what is impossible in the nature of things. For verily the love of the visible brother is an indispensable training towards the love of the invisible Father. We must learn to love little man before we can love the Great God. The world is our school where the visible objects of nature and above all the lives of men teach us to know and love God. Without the education which we there receive the conception and love of the invisible spiritual reality of the Godhead would be impossible. What is true of the love of God is equally true of gratitude and reverence towards Him. All these sentiments we first learn to feel towards man, and then learn to feel in an immensely intensified degree towards God. We love, respect and thank man whom we daily see and deal with in the world, and thus trained we learn to offer our love, reverence and thanksgivings to the Infinite Spirit. He who never thanks his earthly benefactor—can he be grateful to God? He who does not respect an earthly superior—can he reverence the Supreme? He who does not appreciate and love the true and good in humanity—can he realize and love the excellence of the Divinity? He who has never been charitable and forgiving towards his brother—can he measure the height and depth of God's forgiving mercy? No; he who says he can, gives utterance to a 'lie.' In short the exercise of good feeling towards man is an indispensable mediate step towards the exercise of corresponding feeling in a higher degree towards God. This is the doctrine of Human Mediation, and we feel bound to justify it absolutely. But while speaking of the true doctrine it is perhaps necessary to say what is the false doctrine of mediation, in order that while we adopt the former we may guard ourselves against the latter. To honour or love man that we may learn to honour or love God is right. To honour or love man as God is wrong and impious.

To thank every human benefactor for material or spiritual benefits conferred that we may learn to thank God is right and necessary ; but to exhaust our gratitude on any particular man as God is wrong. In the latter case instead of making man what he ought to be, an intermediate stage, we make him the terminus of our spiritual progress ; we forget and miss the end in the means. It would be sinful to allow any man or men to usurp the place of the Divinity in our esteem, gratitude or love. The worship of man or any created object as our Saviour is idolatry, and ought to be eschewed as an abomination. So should we shun the pride which prevents our hearts from bowing to the earthly father whose kindness reveals to us the heavenly Father's merciful providence ; or to those spiritual teachers and guides, who—whether dead or living, whether accredited prophets, ministers or missionaries, or rude pious rustics or forlorn mendicants—by their words and lives teach us to know and love and serve our Maker. Blessed is he who honours father and mother and all spiritual and worldly benefactors, who honours and loves all men as brethren, whether friends or foes, high or low, for such a man loves God truly. Misguided idol-worshippers, defile not your hearts by adoring created objects, thinking that these will give you salvation, for none redeemeth sinners from the bondage of iniquity but the Holy Lord. Ye proud and stiff-necked rationalists and mystics, think not of soaring into God's house with the aid of reason or solitary prayer alone, while your hearts are overloaded with the filth of hatred, ingratitude and misanthropy ; for " whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased and he that hateth his brother shall find His Father's house closed against him." Let us therefore be humble and love one another, that we may love the Lord our Father ; for " if we love one

another, God dwelleth in us and His love is perfected in us."

THE APOSTOLICAL MISSIONARY.

THESE are the memorable words in which Christ sent forth his Apostles to preach the kingdom of God :—" Take nothing for your journey ; neither staves nor scrip, neither bread, neither money ; neither have two coats a-piece ; provide neither gold nor silver, nor brass, in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither have two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves, and salute no man by the way." In these simple but stirring words of a solemn farewell the disciples are commanded to go forth on their missionary tour among ' heathen' nations, destitute of all means of sustenance and all comforts of life, without shoes, and without a scrip in which the gifts of charity may be secured, exposed to all the contingencies of want and suffering, and having no provision even of the necessities of life ; they are to go forth trusting solely to the protection of Providence and relying on the strength of the Almighty. And what is to be their reward ? How are they to be received and treated by the world ? " Go your ways, behold I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves. Beware of men, for they will scourge you in their synagogues, and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, and the brother shall deliver up the brother, and the father the child and the children shall rise up against the parents and cause them to be put to death, and ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." What gloomy prospects are here held forth to the ambassadors of Christ ! They are assured that not only will they find no hospitality or

gratitude but they will find everywhere hatred, bitterness and anger, and will be hunted down with the fiercest persecution. They are to go like meek lambs among ferocious wolves, unarmed and defenceless. Yea their very nearest and dearest relatives are to rise in arms against them, and domestic affections are to be converted into most deadly enmity, and those whom nature has appointed to protect and sweeten life are to wield the weapons of death. Thus, unfurnished and unprotected, and with such appalling prospects before them, the devoted disciples of Christ embarked on their perilous enterprize. History tells us what marvellous success they have achieved in spite of these stupendous difficulties. That the majority of Christian Missionaries of the present day bear not the most distant resemblance to the early propagators of the gospel, either in the spirit or the form of self-denial, no one will deny. The difference is vast and obvious. But whether this circumstance in any way detracts from the merit of these Missionaries and materially affects their claims to be reckoned faithful messengers of the gospel is a question on which opinion is divided. There are many who think otherwise, and hold that the altered circumstances of the age demand and therefore justify the departure in the part of the modern Missionaries from the strict course of action pursued by the Apostles. According to them the Missionaries act wisely in not going to that dangerous extreme of self-denial enforced in the gospel, which not only impair their usefulness and expose them to ridicule and hatred, but in barbarous heathen lands would bring their very life to an untimely end. This point requires serious consideration. Nothing can be clearer than Christ's idea of the Apostolical character as set forth in the words quoted above. In commending it he evidently laid stress on the spirit not on the form prescribed by

him. No importance should be attached to any particular form or outward sign of Missionary character. For it is immaterial whether a Missionary has one coat or two coats, nor would the discovery of a farthing in his scrip render him liable to forfeiture of his honours. The outward sacrifices are only natural manifestations of the spirit of true self-denial, and as such we justify them. We say *natural* advisedly, for the Missionary naturally assumes the character represented in the gospel. Christ's ideal of the Apostle is no less sublime and high than universal and natural. He does not enforce a stiff unnatural system of asceticism and mortification, by his own arbitrary authority. A trustful surrender of self to God is all that Christ demands; and the particular forms of self-denial he specifies are the spontaneous and inevitable consequences of such surrender. We uphold the Apostolical character not because it is Christian, not because it is founded on Christ's precepts and example, not because it was adopted by his Apostles and disciples; but because it is natural, it harmonizes with our spiritual instincts; it is the necessary consequence of faith and resignation, and is seen more or less in all men who devote themselves to Missionary work, in whatever age or country. It tallies exactly with our ideal of what a Missionary ought to be. We regard a missionary as a servant of God, destined and commissioned by Him to devote his life wholly to the propagation of truth. His mission is identified with his life. He has no existence apart from it. He lives for no other purpose in the world, and he dedicates his whole heart and soul and body to his mission, and seeks to fulfil it with unflinching earnestness however much he may thereby be exposed to inconveniences and privations. Unlike the hireling who does his work for the sake of pay, and is sure to abandon it unless he receives

his wages as recompense, he holds himself responsible to God, and seeks no reward on earth for what he feels inviolably pledged to do. He has not been made a Missionary by ordination ; his credentials do not lie in his academical degrees ; his mission does not hang on the patronage of any Society. The deep faith of his own soul seeks spontaneously to communicate itself, and thus by a secret and resistless process of nature he becomes a Missionary. It is not choice but necessity that makes him adopt the high vocation. He must make known to others those precious truths which God has revealed to him. His own faith is the secret of his mission to others, as well as the soul of his success. The truths that fall from his lips are the over-flowings of his heart ; the light wherewith he enlightens others is the light of his own life. His character and position are likewise determined by his faith. His life is a life of simplicity and self-denial ; he has no desire of worldly enjoyments and honours, no fear of worldly distress and danger ; his heart is above the world. With firm faith he goes about preaching God's truth, prepared to meet obloquy and persecution and lay down life for its sake. With cheerful trust in Providence he goes from country to country, converting sinners and extending the kingdom of God, destitute of the comforts of life, provided with no security against want and starvation, and regardless of to-morrow's bread. The Lord feeds him and clothes him ; the Lord protects him. His only object is to serve his Master, and the very spirit of entire submission with which he works brings to him both daily bread and inward joy. He takes lessons from the " fowls of the air " and the " lilies of the field." The influence of such a man must necessarily be vast and deep ; he would convert whole nations by his living faith. Such is our ideal of a Missionary. It is, we believe,

substantially the same as that which was inculcated by Christ, and which was to a great extent realized in the lives and character of his Apostles. Self-denial forms the essences of his sublime teachings, and the Apostolical character which his disciples assumed was its necessary consequence, its natural manifestation in the sphere of Missionary work. His apostles were in fact living examples of that devotion and resignation which he required of all his followers.

IMMOBILITY.

HUMANITY moves on,—theologically, to truth, and religiously, to goodness and godliness. History is but a sacred chronicle of the movements of humanity and its struggles towards progress. But history does not, as its readers will testify, record continued and uninterrupted progress. There is a break here and a break there. The stream of progress stagnates at times. The soldier marches and halts, again he marches and again he halts. In the lives of individuals as well as nations we see rise and fall. It seems that the weary pilgrim sits down after a long and laborious journey, and rests for a time before he resumes it. Have we not experienced this in our own lives? Are there not times when our spiritual energies seems to be at the highest point, and our prayers, our wisdom and love and our active virtues appear in their full bloom? And do not bad times follow when our spiritual life ebbs away, our activity sinks, our hopes too languish away, nay even our beliefs and convictions become weak and unsteady? Through some cause or other life, hitherto advancing, comes to a stand-still, and for weeks or months together every thing seems *statu quo*. All is dull and dreary.

A fatal immobility seizes the soul, and it cannot move. The best sermons of the best ministers fall flat upon the heart; the sweetest hymns please us not; our prayers become dry and unprofitable soliloquies, and our virtuous deeds only mechanical drudgery. Now and then there may flash athwart the mind a holy wish, and a desire to cast off lethargy and press forward. But the palsied soul cannot move, though it would. This is a season of hard trials. Blessed are they that live through it, and safely resume their journey to the holy land, with their faith and energy renewed by Divine grace. But how unfortunate and miserable are they who never recover from their fatal collapse, whose night is not followed by day and, who sleep in life's path but to sink and die! Let none neglect these times of trial. If the vessel is stranded and moves not, the best efforts should be forthwith made to float her, or shipwreck is inevitable. Beware of immobility! It is slow but sure death. Progress is life.

DIRECT AND INDIRECT TEACHING.

OF the two methods of instruction and training in vogue among the leaders of religious sects—the one direct and the other indirect—we decidedly prefer latter. Direct training consists in laying down doctrines and rules of conduct in their minute details, and exercising rigid control with a view to their enforcement. Where such a method is consistently adopted and observed, religious teachers are always busy in elaborating articles of faith and ethical maxims, and lucidly and completely expounding them for the

benefit of their followers. A short creed is pronounced dangerous and is always avoided. Aphorisms are not tolerated. What is clear, elaborate and prolix is in demand, as opposed to what is deep, concise and concentrated. Nothing is hidden, everything clearly explained. Nothing is left to be done by the disciples, every needful doctrine is prepared by the teachers so as to be ready for acceptance. The whole creed is delivered, "cut and dry," into the hands of the followers, in order that they may be spared all effort to understand it, and all doubts and difficulties inevitable in the case of vague and short creeds may, if possible, be avoided. As in theology so in moral discipline, the teacher is bound to provide for every contingency, and regulate every individual's life with a detailed code of legislative and penal injunctions. Rules of conduct are constantly promulgated and different degrees of punishment are administered to offenders in order to keep the Church in order. Thus a vast and complicated machinery of theological and ethical ministration is kept up to communicate directly wisdom and purity to each individual member of the Church. Men are regarded as mere mechanical recipients, that must be constantly cleaned and polished, and replenished with the waters of truth and godliness by spiritual guides and teachers. Thus ministers and a whole retinue of auxiliaries become indispensable to our salvation. We cannot be wise or pure without them. This system of Church government does not commend itself to us. It seems to us to be human, artificial, mechanical and positively harmful. The other—indirect spiritual ministration—is divine, natural, spontaneous and most salutary in its results. The great secret of this method is that the real work of edification is left in the hands of God, earthly teachers doing little beyond imparting general instructions or

serving as occasional helpers. Here we see doctrines and rules, not mechanically forced into the mind by external agencies, but welling up perennially from its own hidden recesses. Here we perceive self-culture, not cramming ; self-government not the imposition of a foreign yoke. Teachers are essential in both these methods of tuition, but the indirect method recognises them only so far as they help self-culture. It offers only a short and laconic creed to the disciple containing however the very essence of theology and morality. Though few its words, each word burns. He too who teaches them speaks not in the cold language of a dogmatist, but with the power of living faith. His vocation is not to expound or explain doctrines, but to rouse and electrify the heart. Hence the short creed he inculcates, penetrates at once the deepest depths of the hearts of his disciples, and quickens their best thoughts and feelings. He has only lighted the fire ; given the first shock ; and sown the seed ; nature will do the rest. Under Divine grace the holy fire will go on warming and illumining the heart ; the electric shock will go on convulsing it ; the seed will germinate and fructify in the fulness of time. In regard both to doctrine and discipline, the teacher reads only a few short lessons to his followers, and then leaves them to be moulded and governed by Divine grace. He does not undertake to form their faith or their character. That belongs to God. His work is done when he has roused conscience to its work. He ceases to speak as soon as the oracle of God begins to speak in the soul. He does not put himself forward as a law-giver and a disciplinarian, to be referred to constantly and in every instance of doubt and difficulty. The aim of all his teachings and ministrations is to enable each disciple to find and interpret the law of heaven in his own soul. He

teaches his followers not to look to him as their light, but to seek and enjoy Divine light in their respective souls. His highest teaching amounts to an influence, an impetus, an inspiration. He never even attempts to move their souls like dead machines ; he never thinks of governing them as vassals and slaves with the despot's rod ; he scorns the idea of training them into abject dependence and servile obedience. He aims at the independent growth of every soul confined to his guardianship, and he holds himself responsible to God for the stewardship. He feels he is only a trustee of a wards' institution ; as soon as juvenile souls attain manhood and are able to trust God and serve Him independently, he transfers them from his own hands to the perfect guardianship of the Everlasting Teacher. We all know how Christ adopted this heavenly method of indirect teaching, and how without a creed and with only a few words of power and a living influence that shall endure though kingdoms perish, he revolutionized the world.

WOMAN'S POSITION IN SOCIETY.

OF woman's true character and mission we are yet profoundly ignorant. Her rightful position in society even the boasted civilization of the nineteenth century has failed to determine. Man and woman do not dwell harmoniously on earth ; their mutual relations may have improved in the course of ages, but are far from being duly adjusted. Marriage, in the vast majority of instances, is but a desecration of the holy union which it was meant to represent. The union of hands is a caricature of the fellowship of souls. Exceptions there have been, honourable and exemplary. History has indeed furnished examples of

pure connubial attachment in ancient as well as modern times, but they are rare examples. As regards society at large there is very little of what is called true love, though hundreds and thousands daily unite themselves in matrimony with hymen's bonds. The world, taught by hard experience, asks Pilate-like, with a sceptical sneer,—What is love ? and would not stay for an answer. To us it appears that like the kingdom of heaven the temple of true love is before, not behind. We have yet to realize the harmony of the sexes. The true relations of man and woman in God's family have not been, but will be determined. For true chivalry we must not look to the past, but to the future. We do not altogether ignore or under value the past ; it is necessary as preparing the way for the kingdom of love which is yet to come, wherein man and woman shall recognise each other's rights. The struggles and conflicts observable in every part of the world are only the harbingers of that fellowship. The domestic and social relations which hitherto existed between man and woman have been unhinged and unsettled by the waves of progressive thought ; and statesmen, legislators and reformers are busily engaged in remodelling them upon a purer basis. Everywhere attempts are being made of a political, legislative and social character to reform these relations. Seldom was there perhaps so earnest an agitation of " women's right " as in the latter half of the present century. Here, in India, we are beginning to feel that we have done gross injustice to our women, and that we must elevate them to their true position, or lay ourselves open to the serious charge of dealing with them as slaveholders and cattle-dealers. Practical efforts are also being made, of a highly encouraging character, to further female reformation, in spite of inevitable opposition. If we look to England we shall find that

one of the hardest battles in which society is there engaged is that for "women's rights." It is contended that women must receive University degrees, and become doctors, barristers, ministers, missionaries, speakers and professors and that they must be permitted to share all the political and social rights of men. Hundreds are furthering the movements, headed by some of the best men and women of the country. But thousands there are who hate and try to thwart it. Their rancour is intense, their antagonism inveterate. There is another thing far more striking in civilized society. Among the educated classes there is a growing aversion to marriage. Many seem to have a strong dislike for the "girl of the period," and think it mean and degrading to marry her. Such a state of things in the very centre of civilization and social refinement is indeed painful, and suggests gloomy and anxious thoughts about woman's position. Alas! she is unhappy. Nor is man happy either. "They rise or sink together." Among Western and civilized nations, man and woman do not, it is true, fight as they do in a barbarous state of society, yet their quarrels are painful and serious. Woman is no longer subjected to a life of cruel physical hardships, and a man would forfeit the title of a gentleman if he ventured to treat her as a beast of burden. This we admit. Yet is her position one of unjust subjection to the other sex. In spite of civilization there is, no doubt, serious misunderstanding between the sexes. They do not know each other, they cannot bear with each other, they are even jealous of each other. They have contrary habits, contrary proclivities, and even contrary wishes and aspirations. They quarrel over the pettiest concerns of daily life. They may 'love' each other as husbands and wives, in the worldly sense of the term; as members of society they may respect each

other. But their hearts do not agree ; there is no friendly equality. But will they never agree ? Yes ; only in religion is the desirable union possible. There can be no true love, taking the word in its highest sense, without spiritual fellowship. Marriage is either a spiritual union of hearts and souls in the presence and under the influence of God, or it is only a carnal alliance. When the Lord brings soul to soul, then only can they be said to enter into ' holy matrimony.' They meet only to help each other as pilgrims to the holy land. How happy are those husbands and wives who are one in the love of God, who share the joys of heaven in their earthly house, and unitedly do all their household work unto His glory ! So too in society man and woman must enter into religious relations with each other or there will be no peace, no progress. Man's sonship and woman's daughter-ship in relation to the holy God must be fully recognised, and their mutual services must be based upon such recognition. God as Father is reflected in man's nature. Hence man and woman must bow to each other, for in doing so they bow to Divinity in humanity. They must love and honour each other, for they are brothers and sisters in God's holy family.

ASCETICISM.

THERE is something good even in asceticism. Modern civilization hates it, laughs at it, and is determined to hunt it out of the world. To sit with an ascetic in the same room is a disgrace and a scandal which the nineteenth century will not tolerate. Philosophers, theologians, moralists and statesmen have all united in this age to do battle with that mean type of humanity. The man in rags loitering in our

streets and crying for food is a 'nuisance,' and is dealt with by the Penal Code. O thou child of poverty ! Is there none in this wide world that will shed a drop of sympathetic tear over thy lot, or say one friendly word in support of thy peculiar mission ? It seems passing strange that while the wildest vagaries of imagination and the most wicked speculations and practices find apologists and adherents in this 'civilized' age, asceticism alone should call forth unanimous and thorough condemnation on all sides and be execrated as an unmitigated evil and an absolute falsehood. Our sympathy is with that small but generous school of eclectics who see some truth in every system of belief and believe that no sect is wholly false. That which is apparently a mass of errors and impurities discloses on analysis redeeming features. The darkest night is not without lightning gleams. The lowest hell of error is not without glimpses of heaven. Even in asceticism there is something noble and sacred. That there is foolishness in it and much that is absurd and mean, we do not deny. But does it not reveal also some of the highest forms of truth and goodness which we miss elsewhere ? Self-sacrifice is the essence of asceticism,—and who will not value it ? With it you see a calm and unquestioning resignation to Providence, a mastery over some of the worst passions of the heart, humility, faith and patience. These virtues are seen to a much greater extent in the life of the ascetic than in any other religious sect. A true ascetic is the very impersonation of resignation. His life is a protest against worldliness. The most devout may learn a lesson from him and benefit by his superior example. Our proud heads must stoop near the feet of the despised *faqeeers* and *yogis* who go about singing the glory of God, and find both subsistence and joy in that heavenly occupation. To those

of us who are immersed in the world, they speak with power. Their examples come to us as living sermons on the text, "vanity of vanities, saith the preacher, all is vanity." Indeed, if we wish to draw our hearts away from the shadowy and perishable gewgaws of the world and resign ourselves completely to Providence, if we are anxious to realize the principle of the famous words in the Sermon on the Mount—"Take no thought for the morrow," if we desire to sacrifice pride and worldliness and sensuality, we can do no better than look to all that is heavenly in the lives of mendicants and ascetics. We are not advocating asceticism. Only what is good in it we commend; its admitted evils we hate and proscribe. To renounce the world, family and children, is an error and a sin. To be ever sad and cynical and put on the gloomy countenance of a misanthrope, to remain in sackcloth and mourning to the end of the chapter,—this is hideously unnatural. To treat the affairs and interests of the world with supreme contempt and indifference is only pious selfishness. True asceticism is opposed to all these. It means nothing more than the crucifixion of worldliness and the lusts of the flesh. It is a life-long adherence to the "vow of penury." It cannot be selfish, for though itself ragged, miserable and poor, it seeks the welfare of all else in the world. It cannot be sad, for it is content with its lot, and feels quite cheerful under the wings of Providence. It cannot forsake home, for though it mortifies and sacrifices self, it cannot neglect the solemn duties it owes to those around. May we have all that is good in asceticism minus its evils!

EQUALITY OF THE SEXES.

IF we are asked to say why we advocate female liberty we must at once remark,—the sister's presence is needful to complete God's family. Our advocacy does not rest on the lower grounds of expediency, conventionalism or civilization. Our ideal of the kingdom of heaven is not a brotherhood but a sisterhood also,—a family of God's children dwelling in peace and purity. To realize this high ideal is the end and aim of human life. We are therefore bound to consecrate all our physical and spiritual energies, our talents, wealth, and life itself to one consistent endeavour to help the formation of a holy family on earth. The education of woman is thus a clear necessity. We have no option in the matter. Nor is it a case of charity. They err who think that the Indian woman solicits a favour at our hands. No, she demands what is her due ; and we are bound to give it. It is a duty we owe to society and to God that should recognise and secure woman's rightful position in the divine family. Viewed in this light the neglect of the other sex is not only an impropriety and error, but a sin, a sin of omission ; while the positive subjection of woman to a degrading and demoralizing system of social servitude is a sin of commission. There is no peculiar merit in giving our women what they are clearly entitled to, to wit, knowledge and freedom ; but to deny them these their just rights would be a culpable dereliction of duty. Such according to Theism, is the right *motive* to the liberation of women. What is the *measure* of such liberation ? How far and in what proportion should we accord knowledge, power and liberty to woman ? In reply we simply urge the equality of the sexes. That man and woman differ in temperament and capabilities, in character and occupation,

few will doubt. Their differences are not accidental, but constitutional. Nature has made them dissimilar and so marked off their peculiarities that each must naturally follow his or her distinct calling. While admitting all these differences we thoroughly believe in the equality of the sexes and the unity of their highest mission. Underneath the diversities of their character and vocation in society, there is an essential identity of position in their humanity. Judge them according to particular traits of character or capacities and you will find what the one has the other has not. But take the character of each as a whole and all apparent inequality disappears. Man's superior physique who can deny? His courage, firmness and determination who will not acknowledge to be greater? But may we not place woman's superior gentleness, meekness, love and charity on the other side of the balance? If it be true that man governs by the force of his intellect, it is equally true that woman rules with the power of her heart. He may influence society by his frowns; she does so by her gentle smiles. The proudest husband must own the dominant power of the wife, the most self-willed wife must confess her subjection to the husband's masculine will. Thus it is that nature keeps the "balance of power" in the little world called home. So in society. In England where woman has obtained considerable power and in the name of chivalry rules society, man still retains the true gubernatorial authority in his hands. In India where man is a despot, who sometimes out-Neros Nero, and woman is a slave daily trampled under feet, she is nevertheless the ruling spirit in the highest concerns of domestic and social life. In the competitive battle of the sexes none has ever yielded the palm, none ever will. Each is superior in certain respects, but all things taken together they stand on a level of equality.

Absolute superiority or inferiority can neither be predicated of man, nor of woman. In God's family man and woman should have a perfect equality of rights and treat each other with equal respect.

June 29, 1873.

THE STUDY OF SCIENCE.

A THEIST must love science with warm enthusiastic love, for science is God's scripture, written by His own hand, infallible and sacred. There are men who look upon science as a mere record of wonderful discoveries and inventions, or at best an exposition of fixed mechanical laws, as they read and investigate and reflect they ejaculate with wonder and joy—How unalterable these laws ! How illustrious the men who discovered them ! Their interest in science is wholly intellectual, not religious. They give glory to Laplace and Newton, not to the Lord of creation. In fact they perceive no religious significance in scientific facts. But with a Theist the case is different. To him every scientific fact is full of God. It directly and vividly reveals His power, wisdom and love. Each force manifests the Central Life ; each law, the fixed and inexorable will of the Great Creator ; each mark of design and contrivance His deep wisdom, and each beneficial arrangement His paternal love. In studying science the Theist does not reach God through slow and laborious processes of induction and inference, but he realizes God and communes with Him face to face. He feels he is reading God's own handwriting. He sees the beauty of the Maker reflected on the mirror of creation. He hears His voice in rustling leaves and murmuring brooks, the

roaring thunder and the sweet warbles of feathered songsters. In fact to him all nature is full of life. Divinity dwells and speaks everywhere. Anatomy and physiology, geology and astronomy, chemistry and zoology are living preachers that speak forth saving wisdom. The smallest science primer is a stirring sermon to a devout Theist, and as he reads fact after fact he cannot help bowing before the throne of Almighty God and magnifying His name. There are certain scientific facts which thrill and electrify and quicken the whole soul. In their presence the true believer feels that he is inspired as by a touch of heaven. The veil suddenly drops from creation's face, and all nature is aglow with the beams of the Heavenly Sun bursting into view. Then we feel how little is the difference between a scientific discourse or experiment and a sermon, and how near we are to the sacred altar, though only engaged as students in scientific researches and studies in a reading room. We sincerely hope all Brahmos, young and old, will assiduously and reverently cultivate the sciences, study closely the scripture of nature, and worship in the vast cathedral of the universe, under heaven's canopy, the Great Spirit Who shines everywhere.

July 6, 1873.

THE REALITY OF GOD.

WHAT can be more obvious than the reality of the material objects with which we daily come in contact? The rose we see, the table we use, the food we eat,—are not these *real* things? Everybody says and thinks they are—from the little schoolboy

to the profoundest thinker. So palpable and self-evident is this truth, so strong and universal human faith in it, that to deny it would argue nothing short of insanity and a total perversion of the intellectual nature of man. No man in his senses would call a tree or a mountain a shadowy unreality, or regard the star-bespangled heavens as only a brilliant vision. If a man were to say that he never eats any real substance but at dinner swallows mere ideas, people would laugh at him and question the soundness of his cerebral system. Matter is real,—this is an incontestable truth, and as clear as noon-day. Yet this simplest of all truths, has taxed the minds of the greatest thinkers of ancient and modern times. For many long ages metaphysics laboured to discover proofs of the reality of the material world, but in vain. Most ingenious theories were propounded, and elaborate systems fabricated to account for it, but all failed in the end. All men believed in the reality of matter, but none succeeded in discovering the logical ground of such belief. The rose *is* real, but how do I know that it is so? Where is the evidence for such presumption? By what process of reasoning do I come to such an inference? Of this problem ancient and modern philosophy failed to find any solution until the last century shed light on its intricacies, and by one stroke cut that Gordian knot which had been the puzzle of ages. We perceive the reality of that external world *immediately* and *intuitively* and without any reasoning. So said Reid. This simple announcement was enough. It brought peace into the agitated world of metaphysics; all controversy was silenced. all doubts were dispelled, and all difficulty vanished. The truth is that as soon as we perceive an object we know it to be an external reality. The knowledge is immediate, and is above reasoning. The same truth, we say, applies to our

cognition of God. We speak of course with reference to the normal and natural condition of the mind. It has long been the fashion, and it still is, to represent man's knowledge of the Real God as a logical inference and the result of laborious process of reasoning. It is assumed that our highest idea of God is only an inferential belief in His existence and attributes, deduced from *a priori* and *a posteriori* arguments. To us this appears to be a grave mistake. There is no more logic in our apprehension of supersensible than of sensible realities. As the real existence of matter, so the real existence of God is immediately cognizable. No logical process intervenes in either case. Knowledge means direct perception. It is true that there are men who rest satisfied with logical notions of God and His attributes, and whose highest belief is only the final Therefore of a long series of Wherefores. This is evidently second-hand knowledge supported by hearsay evidence, and cannot be identified with the true conception of the Divinity. It is one thing to say logically—'God is,' and be able to produce extraneous testimony in proof of the thesis; it is quite another thing to say—'Here is God, my eyesight is my witness.' The one is a mere admission of the being of God, the other is the vivid knowledge of His Living Reality. We regard the latter as the only true knowledge of the Supreme Being. It is this which we understand by Theistic cognition and faith. A second-hand notion of a material object is possible, where we see not with our own eyes and trust hearsay evidence, or where we are blind and cannot see. But such a notion is nothing compared to the vivid perception of the real object as it is seen with one's own eyes. So it is with our knowledge of God. Man needs not abstract notions, logical ideas or cold formal inferences of a distant deity, but a clear and direct perception

of the real God, whom he wishes to love as his Father and follow as his Master. Nothing short of this can satisfy our hearts or rescue our souls from the besetting doubts, difficulties and dangers of the world. We must *see* Him and *realize* His presence : or we know Him not as He ought to be known. The heart panteth for a direct view of His benignant face, and the Lord of mercy, though invisible does reveal Himself to man even as visible objects, are seen. The eye sees matter and believes it ; the eye of faith sees God and believes Him. Why we believe in the reality of material objects philosophy fails to explain, except by declaring such belief to be intuitive and immediate ; so true philosophy must confess that there is no other reason why the Theist recognizes the reality of his God except that he immediately perceives Him in intuitive consciousness. All reality according to philosophy is immediately and directly cognizable,—the reality of matter and mind, of *ego* and *non ego*, and the reality of God. Here belief means perception. What philosophy teaches daily devotion confirms. Believing philosophically that the Real God is unknowable except as an object of intuitive apperception, the Theist finds in his daily prayers and communion the Holy Spirit standing before him, face to face, as a majestic and shining Reality, the very sight of whose face quickens, thrills and sanctifies the soul. Thus philosophy and faith harmonize in our knowledge of God. In thought as well as in prayer the soul realizes Him intuitively.

July 13, 1873.

RELIGION AND MORALITY.

THE distinction generally drawn,—and one which philosophers also recognise,—between religion and morality, appears to us to be both unscientific and productive of evil consequences. It is a distinction without a difference. Theology and ethics have a common root, and seem divergent and different only in the application of the fundamental ideas which they hold in common. They both deal with our relations and duties to God, and the deeper concerns of immortality. They both aim at purity and salvation. The only difference seems to be that the one deals more with God and His dealings with us, and the other deals more with man and his duties to society and God. The distinction however is not real, not radical. In fact theology and ethics constitute one science, and not two sciences. It is, however, the interest of the world to divorce the one from the other, and treat religion and morality as essentially distinct from each other. It is the fashion to represent morality as something altogether human and religion as something wholly divine. The former is of the earth earthy, and relates to the less important matters of man's temporal relations and social duties. The latter is believed to be heavenly, and comprises the far higher matters of faith, devotion and spiritual communion. This arbitrary consignment of ethics to the affairs of the earth and of theology to the affairs of the spirit world is harmful in two ways. Among those who profess to be religious there are thousands who neglect and violate the similar rules of morality, while indulging in such things as prayer and devotion. In their religious fervour they become indifferent to their moral delinquencies. Some even

go so far as to settle down quietly to a life in which vices and prayers lie in about equal proportions. Every Church has been defiled with the iniquity of professedly religious men. Had they attached equal importance to morality and religion they would have become both purer and godlier. The evil effects of the distinction in question are apparent in another direction. Men of the sceptical school try to persuade themselves and others that they can be moral without being religious, that they can be pure and good in all the relations of life without the aid of anything like prayer. They boast of their moral purity, which they assert they have achieved by their own exertions alone, and without religion and God. Such pride is simply foolish ; such vaunting is preposterously absurd. Can man attain godliness without God ? It is easy to trace these two-fold evils to the unfounded distinction between morality and religion. We emphatically say that no man can be religious without being moral, and none can be moral without being at the same time religious. In fact the two cannot exist apart from each other. Divorced they die. They are one and the same thing with different aspects. They are essentially and fundamentally one. Let us prove this. We have already said, in a previous article, that our knowledge of the real entity of God is immediate and intuitive. In other words, we directly perceive the Real God, just as we perceive external objects. But our idea of God is not simply an idea of Divine entity or existence. Truly, to realize God is not to fancy a motionless and inactive substance, but to behold the Living and Active Deity as He is. The spirit of God not only *is*, but He actively *teaches* and *guides* us. We cannot realize Him apart from His active functions. We not only see His reality, but we hear His monitory voice. How do we hear ? As we directly and immediatly see

Him, so we *intuitively* realize His voice commanding us to do this and eschew that. This moral intuition is conscience. It is nothing but the hearing of God's moral injunctions. To see God is religion : to hear Him is morality. The science of communion is theology ; the science of obedience is ethics. They both have their root in our knowledge of God.

FLOWERS.

OUR countrymen have little or no taste for flowers. Even the educated classes form no exception. Whatever the cause of this national deficiency may be, the fact is truly deplorable. It argues not only æsthetic but also moral numbness. There are men who look upon flowers as an unnecessary luxury, affording a mere hollow gratification to the senses. As 'philosophers' they think it unwise to recognise any fascination in flowers, and they wish to keep their hearts above those emblems of ephemeral beauty. They would even proscribe in a cynical spirit the enjoyment of flowers, and set down one who indulged in them as a pleasure seeker. Now, we do not look upon flowers as a mere source of idle pleasure, though it must be admitted they bring a fund of pure delight to the senses. Flowers have higher uses in the economy of nature. They are capable of exerting a high moral influence on us. They speak both to the soul and to the senses. They not only gladden the eye, but they penetrate and purify the inner life. Beneath their external beauty there lies hidden a pure and heavenly beauty, which exalts, ennobles and sanctifies the soul and draws it Godward. He who loves flowers loves God, for they are His handiwork. There is something peculiarly sacred in them. They

soften our temper, curb our passions, dispel our doubts and fears, and give us purity and peace and gladness. Their very touch seems sanctifying. Their beauty discloses the benignant smile of "our Father dear," and their sweet fragrance wafts into our hearts the sweeter message of His love, as nothing else can. He who casts devout glances on those tender roses, clad in the loveliest attire of vernal beauty, redolent of heavenly sweetness, and softly preaching their Creator's love, cannot but feel that he is near heaven. A garden has been found in all ages to be best calculated to inspire holy thoughts and devotional feelings. What a vast amount of moral influence do flowers exert on the English people, and how passionately fond are even the lowest and poorest men among them of their little flower-trees and plants! Here, alas! they are despised and often trampled under feet without compunction. Go to native houses; not one in a hundred contains a flower pot. This sad neglect of one of the richest blessings of heaven,—one of the sweetest gifts of Providence, distresses us profoundly; and we wish we could see our countrymen and friends cultivate a taste for flowers in a really devout spirit.

" Oh, would that every man, however poor,
 " Had, in this pleasant favoured land of ours,
 " His bit of garden, however small.
 " That he might call his own; and dig and plant,
 " And eat what he had sown: our city poor,
 " That they could feel the influence of flowers.
 " Summer their children (what is childhood, what,
 " Without its daisies and its buttercups?).
 " Live in the presence of the mighty trees,
 " And breathe the cool fresh bracing air of fields,
 " Well, if it may not be, then get a flower,
 " And put it in thy window, sun thyself,
 " With its dear beauty, raise thy spirit up,
 " With its fresh fragrance, for it smells of heaven,
 " Remembrancer of Eden. Gardening,

" Man's primal work is most blessed toil,
 " And hath strange leverage on us. Dig, thyself,
 " (The gardener enjoys the garden most,
 " More than his master), and 'twill soothe thy mind,
 " Calm thy irascible temper, hush thy fears,
 " And send thee peaceful to the tug of life,
 " Its crosses and its ills. It cheers a man,
 " Makes him kind-hearted, social, genial,
 " Forms a serene parenthesis from care,
 " And his whole nature raises and improves."

July 20, 1873.

GOD'S GRACE AND MAN'S EFFORTS.

MAN is saved by grace, and there is no merit in his works which can buy salvation. This doctrine, accepted by all humble and devout souls, is sound and true in itself. But there is some danger in the way in which we may apply it to life. There is no difficulty in comprehending the significance of the fundamental principle of trusting to Divine grace alone for salvation. Nor is there any hesitation on our part in recognising the necessity of thorough humility, sincere prayerfulness, and child-like dependence which the doctrine suggests. Neither our boasted wisdom nor our good works avail to save the depraved heart. Weak and wicked, paralyzed and dying, the sinner cannot save himself. None but the Almighty can redeem him from the galling chains of iniquity. We must, therefore, entirely cast off self-sufficiency, pride and presumption, and in all humility kneel and pray. All this is admitted. The question then arises,—Are we to leave every thing in the hands of Providence and remain idle, trusting

that Divine grace will in due time do everything for us ? Here lies the difficulty and the danger we are speaking of. If God be all-in-all, is man a cypher in the scheme of redemption ? Does salvation mean that man is carried sleeping on the wings of Divine mercy into heaven ? If so, many are likely to find in such views a plea of idleness, quietism, dreamy sentimentalism, and even of complaisant acquiescence in a life of ungoverned sensuality and sin. We need not imagine such cases for they are real and veritable. There are men who actually take advantage, if we so express ourselves, of the doctrine of Divine all-sufficiency. They confess, with some degree of frankness, that they are unable to cope with the vices to which they have long been addicted. and have no power over the unruly lusts of the heart, that they have therefore abandoned all struggles, and in the midst of inactivity and rest are looking forward to the time when they will be saved by grace. Such time, alas ! never comes, for they expect an impossibility. God does not help them who will not help themselves. Hence is it that many in the religious world continue in vice till the last day of their existence, in spite of prayer and devotion and supposed trust in God's redeeming mercy. Nay we are all more or less prone to this evil, and often fail to reform our habits because we leave that in God's hands which ought to be done by ourselves. Let us find the root of the evil that we may eradicate it. It seems to us that the whole difficulty arises from not recognising the double agency—Divine and human—involved in our salvation. There is danger in neglecting or ignoring either. If you deny the Divine element altogether, you make man his own saviour. Religion sinks in proud rationalism, and vain conceited man, without prayer, seeks to reform and sanctify himself. On the other hand, if you ignore human agency, reli-

gion is reduced to indolent devotion and sentimental quietism lying side by side with undisturbed immorality. There is no salvation unless the two unite. In the normal condition of the soul they do unite, naturally but mysteriously. Divinity and humanity co-work in the soul, and our growth is the result of their joint action. So the little plant grows, drawing sap from the earth and receiving warmth from above. Let none suppose that because salvation is the gift of God's free grace, no effort is needed on the part of the recipient. He must work and labour and struggle to the fullest extent of his physical and mental energies. He must employ all available means of conversion, neglecting no instrument that can help him. If he is beset with temptations or addicted to vicious indulgences, he must be engaged in hourly warfare with them, and do all that lies in his own power to overcome them. And yet he must humbly believe that he does nothing of his own self. He fights in the strength of the Lord. All that he has to do is to surrender himself to God, and then Divine grace works in him and makes him work unto his own salvation. This is the whole secret of the soul's conversion. Here we see not two facts, but one fact ; not two forces, one wholly human, the other wholly Divine, but one mighty force in which the Divine and the human are blended together. Every step that man takes towards truth and purity is the result of Divine grace, not acting apart from him but working in and through him. He cannot say,—I will not work. Almighty grace constrains him, if he is really humble and submissive, to work and fight. And when the true soldier does fight he feels that the power he exerts is not his own, but the Captain's. His wisdom and love, his prayers and practices are not his, but breathed into him, and sustained too, by Divine grace. There is naught

in him that does not bespeak grace. Nothing grows from below but what in the first instance came from above. He reads, he thinks, he acts, he moves his hands and feet, and toils for his own spiritual benefit ; but in all this man works in God and God works through man. Thus pride is rendered impossible on the one hand, and indolent dependence on the other. Deep devotion and earnest war with sin harmonize. Man in prayer humbly says unto God,—I am nothing ; Thou art my all. And in life's battle-field he conquers his passions with Divine power, and vigorously chases away sin, saying,—“ Get thee behind me, Satan.”

July 27, 1873.

RESOLUTION.

DURING the car festival in Bengal one often sees how, when the huge and unwieldy car of Juggernath is pulled along by hundreds of devotees, who lend their feeble hands to the service of the deity, the wheels suddenly stop, owing to some unknown cause. The men pull the rope, again they pull, but their repeated efforts fail to move the car. Additional hands are secured, but to no purpose. What is the matter ? Why this stand-still ? None can determine the wherefore. Some are led to think that the ponderous vehicle has somehow become heavier. But no, the car is just as heavy as before. Others conjecture there is some obstacle underneath, but inquiry shows there is none. What then is the cause ? While indulging in these fruitless surmises the men are not idle ; their hands are plying the rope. Hours have elapsed, yet the car has not moved over an inch of ground. All hope seems to be fast sinking away,

and with it the energy of the men, when one among the crowd with the utmost enthusiasm suddenly exclaims "Haribol." The drooping spirits and energies of the entire assembly are revived with aggravated force. They all wildly shout forth "Haribol," and then follows "a strong pull and a pull altogether." And lo! the car moves rapidly and triumphantly. This incident suggests a lesson of great value, which we should do well to adopt for our guidance. In our journey through the world we often come to a point, we know not how, where all spiritual progress stops, and all our efforts to proceed further prove ineffectual. Day after day we try to move, but we cannot. Months and years elapse, we are where we were. Our ideas and thoughts, our feelings and sentiments, our prayers and meditations, our actions and undertakings all seem fixed and screwed into a dull, unvarying and lifeless routine. Neither reading nor friendship nor even travels in foreign countries improve matters. We begin to think we shall never get better, and that spiritual stagnation will bring about our death. The whole scene, however, changes as soon as we, with the name of the Almighty on our lips, and with a noble and strong resolution in our hearts enthusiastically push forward the car of life. What years of thoughtful calculations and plodding industry failed to accomplish is done in a moment by an invincible resolve, which rouses up all the sleeping energies of the soul with God's strength, and says,—“Now or never. Help me God!” The battle about to be lost is gained when the soldier is suddenly thrilled into new life and courage by the Captain's cheering bugle, and plunges into a desperate charge against the enemy. Enthusiasm conquers; not cold calculating prudence. Inspiration is a miracle, not a slow growth.

*July 27, 1873.***CONTRADICTING GOD'S WORD.**

MEN not only disobey God's will, but they also contradict His word. It is this double iniquity that makes our conversion so difficult as it is. The man who has, through a habitual course of sensuality, sunk into the lowest depth of immorality, is suddenly confronted by Divine grace, and receives an unexpected offer of salvation from Him who not only saves them that come but seeks and saves the lost. If the sinner would only believe Him and accept the offer with perfect faith and trust, he would be saved, though his sins were "thick as autumnal leaves that throw the brooks in Vallombrosa." But he would not believe. Nay he would proudly call in question and contradict the saving counsel of heaven. The Lord in the plenitude of His mercy repeatedly points out the way, but the unbelieving sinner as often says—this is *not* the way, and turns away from it. 'Pray humbly and sincerely, and thy heart shall become pure,'—saith the Lord. 'No,' says the wicked sinner, 'prayer cannot purify me. I have tried it and found it wanting.' 'Faith can remove mountains of difficulties and make impossibilities possible,'—thus saith the Lord. But the sinner, tauntingly as it were, hints that it is an exaggeration. Should the Lord command us to place our entire reliance upon Him and take no thought for the morrow, our worldly hearts will immediately turn round and say,—'No,' that is asceticism, we will not have it. Our children will die if we give up prudence.' If we are divinely enjoined to forgive a troublesome foe, our angry hearts will remonstrate and protest, saying,—'Forgiveness in such a case would be cowardice. We must beat the enemy, or he will get worse.' When

the Lord directs us to cast away unbrotherliness, and unite as one family to form the "kingdom of heaven," our reply is,—“That is poetry, a romantic idea, a dream which can never be realized.” Should the sluggard be disturbed, and roused by a thundering cry in the heavens,—‘Rise immediately and fight, or you are ruined,’ he will demand and justify a little more sleep and a little more slumber, and argue that nothing ought to be done in haste. Thus we are frequently contradicting God’s word, and saying Nay when He says Aye. The sin of transgressing His will is enormous enough. Why do we intensify it, and aggravate the difficulty or cure by denying the remedy? Our salvation will undoubtedly be hastened if we bow with unquestioning submission to those solemn and sweet Divine assurances which hourly we hear in the inmost heart.

August 3, 1873.

IT, HE AND THOU.

THE representation of the Supreme Being by these three pronouns—It, He and Thou, may be said to indicate the three successive stages of man’s knowledge of Divinity. In the lowest stage of thought the mind is satisfied with recognising a creative force or a pervading substance as the God of the Universe. Deity is spoken of, conceived and perhaps also worshipped as a mysterious Something out of *which* has been evolved all that is, and which is the underlying substance and essence of all creation. Neither the intellect in thought nor the soul in worship thinks it possible to get beyond this dim Something, and man’s highest aspirations and homage are directed

unto the neuter and impersonal pronoun *It*. We detect this form of theology in some of the earliest utterances of the Vedas and the pantheistic teachings of the Upanishads. Take the following lines which occur in the famous hymn (126th) of the tenth book of the Rig Veda :—

“ The only One breathed breathless by itself ;
 “ Other than *It* there nothing since has been.”

The Vedantic motto often quoted in Brahmo books, *Tat Sat*, means “ *It* [God] is truth.” But both the nature worshippers of the Vedic period and the pantheists of the Vedantic age show devotion of a high order and also precious gems of truth. The hardest and worst form in which an impersonal divinity is recognised may be seen in modern rationalism, or force-worship, if we may so describe it. Men of the Darwinian school trace creation through successive evolutions to some mechanical force, and bow before *It* with wondering minds but prayerless souls. In fact these men have hardly any theology, and would be set down as atheists but for their aversion, for respectability’s sake, to that epithet. We come now to the second stage to which natural necessities drive humanity. Man must not only know but also love. His heart naturally turns from an unfeeling creator like space or force to a Person. A loving heart seeks a Loving God. Human personality seeks Divine Personality. The son seeks the Father. The result may be either an indirect knowledge of God or a direct preception of His face. Where the former is the case the Supreme Creator is conceived, loved, adored and served, but always as “ the third person.” It is a Father and Guide, it is true, but withal a hidden and inaccessible Deity. Divine love acknowledged and magnified, but it is more the love of a ruler’s general providence and kind supervision than the

special providence and attachment of a father. God does not love us, He does not even know us, individually. We think of Him as a Father feeding and protecting us, and answering our prayers, from His highest throne, through established laws and a general economy. This sort of distant and half-hearted relationship cannot long satisfy us. Nature drives us a step farther. We feel, under the promptings of natural impulses, a strong wish to approach and *see* Him whom we have only known as our Father. And thus 'He' is converted into 'Thou.' In the highest stage of religious consciousness we stand before God face to face, and speak unto Him directly. Our prayers are not meditations of 'Him,' but words addressed to 'Thou.' The Iheists creed is not—He is, but—Thou Art. The Theist's prayer is not—May He help me, but—Do Thou help me. The Theist's hope is not—He will save me, but—Thou wilt save me. The Theist's delight is not—I am with Him, but—I am with Thee. The world is pressing on towards this direct personal communion with the ever-living and ever-present Father. Blessed are they that *see* God !

August 17, 1873.

A FEW MINUTES WITH NATURE.

OCCASIONAL visits to a garden are alike pleasant and profitable. We recommend them on high moral grounds, both as a relaxation and as a discipline. They are essential to the normal growth of humanity. Constituted as we are we cannot do without flowers and flower-gardens. Life would show a partial and one-sided development without them, and lose half

its poetry and sweetness. None interested in true spiritual culture could despise or neglect the heavenly wisdom they preach to the mind, the heavenly joy they afford to the heart, or the healing balm they dispense to the wounds of the afflicted soul. Their sacred influence is indeed indispensable to the sanctifying and perfecting of our nature. Who does not feel a natural craving for the benefits of such influence? Wearied and exhausted in the struggles and toils of life, harassed by its corroding cares, and embarrassed by its ever-recurring difficulties, who would not instinctively run to a quiet rural retreat, and seek a temporary respite and relaxation under the cool shade of lonely trees? Who would not occasionally shun the city—the whirlpool of activity, and the hotbed of temptations and vices,—and seek the better and purer atmosphere of a country house? It will perhaps be argued that there are not a few in every country who constantly repair to gardens, but with little or no advantage, and that some even return from such places with polluted hearts. Alas! this is too true. How many there are among our countrymen who convert their suburban gardens into scenes of bacchanalian orgies and vicious carousals! Those who are not morally degraded but are yet of a worldly turn of mind think that the highest advantage of garden parties is that friends can sing, dine and converse together, and so enjoy themselves as to forget the cares and anxieties of the world. Their only object is pleasure; a convivial friendly gathering is all that they aim at. Such men, therefore, derive very little moral benefit from their temporary sojourn in their respective villas, and their character undergoes hardly any improvement. The reasons are obvious. In order to profit by a visit to a garden we must go there with a high moral motive, not with a desire of social re-union or of a mere temporary respite from worldly

cares and sorrows. Our object should be to study nature and to hold communion with nature. In such study we shall find the highest wisdom ; in such communion the purest joy ; and in both we shall find a moral force calculated to mould and regulate our character. Those who leave the bustle and traffic of the city for a country retreat or a romantic village ought to feel that they are starting on a pilgrimage to the holy land,—the holiest land on earth. For what place is there holier and heavenlier than a garden ? And let them so prepare their minds and hearts that their sojourn in that favoured and consecrated place may have a sanctifying effect on their character. On their arrival there they should keep their souls at a safe distance from all things artificial and worldly, and remember that these they have altogether left behind as things with which they have not only no concern at present, but which are positively adverse to their present mission. Let glittering art drop out of sight and the shadowy world pass beyond recollection's field as things irrelevant and mischievous for the time being. Even the company of man and of the best friends should be shunned. For nature can never be fully appreciated or relished except in solitude, and society is an admitted foe to communion. Moreover we have had enough of human society, and having deliberately run away from the haunts of men it is absurd to seek that disturbing influence which it is our present object to avoid as completely as possible. Having thus cut himself off from all adverse influences,—away from the world, family and friends,—let the pilgrim to Nature's shrine take a seat or stretch his weary limbs under a shady tree, and in solitary communion wholly surrender himself to Nature. Before and behind, on the right and the left, above and below, it is all Nature. He sees nothing else. Nature's beauty, with all its simplicity, freshness and

loveliness, encircles and encompasses him on all sides. Every thing he sees is God's handiwork, fresh from His hand and therefore sacred. In the tree and the flower He reveals Himself and all space, as far as the eye can reach, is full of Him. The solitary student of Nature feels he is ushered into a new world, where everything is Divine, and whose "sights and sounds" are all celestial. Where am I?—he asks. There is no response except a deep one in life itself. He is lost in nature and in the God of nature. He sees and hears, thinks and feels only what is natural and Divine. He drinks continually the sweet nectar of nature's inspiration. To him nature lives, and warmly he loves nature. How lovely are those tender buds and flowers, how pure and stainless! How their soft lips speak love and wisdom and purity! He hears those words and beholds that beauty, and is charmed. "Yonder rose is my friend and sister,"—his enraptured heart seems to say,—"none, on earth so pure, so sweet! I am thine, O rose divine!! Hark! in captivating strains, the little jocund bird above sings its Maker's praise. "Chant those psalms, beloved warbler! And let me soar like thee, O brother, nearer and nearer our Father's throne." Thus the solitary devotee, in full accord with living nature, feels a holy and passionate attachment for trees and flowers, plants and creepers and birds, and for all natural objects. He loves these objects more than his best friends. He finds not only sweetness but also purity in their company. There is no guile, no untruth, no unchastity, no pride, no envy, no selfishness, no worldliness; there is nothing mean or impure in nature. The more he silently discourses with nature, the more is he purified and sanctified under its heavenly influence and inspiration. It gladdens his heart; it does more, it disciplines and reforms his life. Lo! in a few minutes he has become happier

and purer in nature's company ; and he returns to the world and to his family to tell the glad tidings of his conversion in the holy land through floral baptism.

August 24, 1873.

THE ARCHITECT AND HIS WORKMEN.

RELIGION is spiritual engineering. The Lord is the Supreme Architect, and we are all His workmen. We are here, each with a trowel, to build the Heavenly Home. Each has a distinct and definite part to perform, and in his own appointed way, contributes to the general end. On the mind of each workman is impressed indelibly a complete design of the Home, drawn with artistic perfection and in glowing colours by the masterly hand of the Divine Architect. All mankind are pressing towards a consummation of this high and perfect ideal. Though there is an infinite diversity of operations and a great disparity of ability, there is a striking unity in the general result. The rich and the poor, the learned and the illiterate, poets, philosophers, statesmen, kings and rulers, men of science, school-masters, ministers and missionaries, judges and magistrates, patriots and philanthropists, traders and merchants, all are working, consciously or unconsciously, according to their respective capacities and resources, and in different ways, to promote that common object, and the effect of their conjoint exertions is that century after century the house of God slowly rises. The progress is slow, very glow. Centuries are but minutes in the

history of human progress. Nations rise and fall, kingdoms flourish and fade, the tide of revolution sweeps off the landmarks of ancient institutions, old races die and new races become old, yet the upshot of all these vicissitudes is the steady growth of the Divine family. All ancient history conduces to it, the tide of modern history is rolling towards that destination. No nation, no individual has lived in vain. No institution, religious, moral and social, has perished without leaving its effects. The lowest and obscurest man is quietly contributing to the advent of the kingdom of heaven—the edification of God's church. Some may have more important functions than others. Some may achieve mightier and more glorious exploits than the rest. But all hands are needed to complete the future home. None can be dispensed with without leaving a void. Every hand is needful, aye indispensable. Let us draw two lessons from the fact. We must respect each other, and never despise even the least among men, for the Lord uses the highest and the lowest alike as instruments for the construction of His house on earth. Let none think he can do any part of the work single-handed, however great his intelligence, ability and piety may be. Those whom he hates and tries to shun as his inferiors are quite as needful to the completeness and success of the vast engineering enterprise in which he is engaged. He may have been appointed to a higher order of work, nevertheless he must remember that all are "called," and none can be rejected or ignored. Should he proudly despise any, he does so at the risk of endangering the completeness and unity of the Father's house. Let mutual respect keep the workmen together. Let them welcome all into the field as co-workers, believing that even the smallest instrument is needful, and the commonest workman that climbs up the scaffolding

with a handful of mortar is indispensable. Another lesson may be deduced. We mean unity among God's children. If we are all enlisted in the service of the Divine Architect and engaged in the same work why should we fall out? Are we not serving the same Master? Are we not working out the same design? If so, why should we quarrel among ourselves? They are mistaken who believe that there must be an identity of occupation or at least a uniformity of procedure in order that there may be unity of spirit and friendly communion. They are hoping to achieve an impossibility who try to make every body think and say and act as they themselves think, say and act. It is absurd to suppose that all men can be tied to the same unvarying routine of daily work. If men were dead matter then alone would this be possible. Nor is dull uniformity nature's economy. In the moral as in the physical world there is unity in the midst of variety. Men will disagree, races and communities will differ, there must be differences of tastes, predilections and social position, yet all must contribute to the success of their common mission. Retaining their respective individuality and all their peculiarities of temper and character, they must work together in a friendly and harmonious spirit, under the leadership of their common Head. Thus there will be unity in spite of diversity, true concord in spite of apparent discord. The workers are many in their diverse occupations and pursuits; but they are one in their central destiny. Let us not quarrel because we are engaged in executing different parts of the building or supplying different kinds of materials. Let us rather rejoice that with all our differences, personal and national, we are carrying out a common plan and serving and glorifying a common Master.

*August 31, 1873.***ORIGIN OF SIN.**

THE will is the root of all that is good and bad in our character. Our virtues and vices may be traced to it as their ultimate source. Philosophy cannot discover an ulterior cause. Ask the sinner why he defiles himself, and he will honestly and promptly reply that he is himself responsible for his own vices, and that he has no other explanation to offer of his own wickedness but that he chose to bring it about himself. Some may try to find at least a partial palliation of their guilt in the violent excitement of certain passions and evil propensities in the heart which are said to drive men *irresistibly* to sin. If vicious motives govern man, then he cannot clearly be responsible for his actions; the whole blame must attach to those motives or carnal propensities or outward circumstances by which he is said to be governed. But such is not the case. The will is never forcibly or tyrannically swayed by them. It determines; it is not determined. Motives only offer inducements, which may or may not be accepted by the will. The final power of vetoing belongs to it. If there are bad motives, there are good motives as well. If the charms of carnal life offer attractions, equally powerful inducements lie on the other side. If avarice, ambition, love of distinction, lust, anger, pride and selfishness incline the mind to evil, justice, charity, patriotism, conjugal affection, forgiveness and all moral and devotional susceptibilities persuade us to walk in virtue's path. It is the will that determines which way the mind is to go. Like well-trained and astute lawyers, the motives present on their side the best and most alluring arguments for good and evil; it is the will, however, that pronounces judgment

after hearing counsel's pleadings on both sides. The power of final decision belongs to none else. It is altogether incorrect to say that man is governed or led away by passions ; the truth is, he allows himself to be so led away. No manner of sin can touch him unless and until he consents to be contaminated. Till his own hand voluntarily signs the bond of self-surrender, impurity has no authority of arresting his body or mind. Sin is not, as some represent it, the murder of the human soul by foul passion ; it is always suicide and voluntary self-destruction. We are ready to admit there is much truth in the argument,—our consciousness being witness,—that passions do acquire considerable power by habit so as to drive us sometimes, apparently in spite of ourselves, into evil. But who gave those passions such power ? If lust, drunkenness, anger and covetousness are sometimes irresistible, who made them so ? The sinner himself. By repeatedly inflaming them, he has himself enkindled a fire in his own mind which he now feels unable to extinguish. Even when he is desperately assailed and vanquished by certain unruly passions, and lies chained and fettered like a powerless and helpless slave at their feet, it is he himself who gave them the force and the weapons wherewith to conquer and captivate him. His will lies at the root of those repeated acts of vicious indulgence which in the course of time have acquired the solidity and force of a confirmed habit. But however strong and seemingly invincible evil habits may be, they are not really invincible. The enslaved sinner can still rise, re-assert his rights, and cast off the galling yoke of sin. The worst despotism may so weaken and crush his soul as to render him altogether lifeless ; but there is power enough left in him to effect a revival at any moment if he is so inclined. The deadliest malady has its antidote. From the lowest depth of hell the

fallen soul can rise in the strength of the Lord to the highest and brightest spot in heaven. The most hopeless sinner is not doomed to the life of an eternal outcast. Man can only mortgage his liberty for a time, but that heavenly treasure he cannot sell for ever. He is made constitutionally free, and though he may serve the world and sin at times, nothing can destroy his liberty.

September 14, 1873.

NATURAL DEPRAVITY.

SIN is not, as many people suppose, a positive evil. It is, like darkness, negative, not positive. We all know that darkness is only the absence of light and is not a positive thing. So sin is only the absence of the light of purity, and signifies spiritual darkness. The sun is a positive reality; it diffuses on all sides positive rays of light, and removes darkness from the face of the earth. The Infinite Sun of Holiness similarly sheds the light of purity on the moral universe, and dispels the gloom of sin which enshrouds men's minds. To believe that in creation there is a positive thing called sin, whether inherent in human nature or incarnate in a being living apart from men, is to suppose the Holy Lord of the universe capable of creating by His own hand anything impure or wicked. No moral evil can emanate from the Fountain of Purity; Holiness cannot create unholiness. This is a truism. To deny it is a scandal against common sense and a blasphemy against the Almighty. Whatsoever the Lord has created is pure, innocent or indifferent. There is no depravity in nature,—neither in material nor in moral nature.

For nature is God's. It would be as incorrect and unphilosophical to say that the rose or the lily is wicked as to predicate depravity of man's nature. There is no more iniquity in the human soul created by God than in the material objects framed by His hand. In the *constitution* of things there can be no sin. If then God is incapable of creating positive moral evil, and if nothing impure exists in creation, whence came sin into the world? All sin originates in man's free will. He voluntarily commits sin. The popular idea of sin is that something foul and wicked clings to the constitution of humanity in the shape of vicious propensities. The Hindus speak of *shara ripu*,—the six enemies; as if the Holy and Merciful God has created in the heart of man six natural adversaries to attack and ruin him! Pride, anger, lust and the so-called passions are not in themselves vicious or wicked. They are meant for beneficial purposes; but they may be abused, and when they are abused they lead to evil. It is not passions that make men sinful; but men's will that makes those passions a source of immorality and unholiness. Man wilfully disobeys God's law and rejects His light. Such disobedience is sin; it is evidently negative. Man's grossest vices are a negation of godliness.

September 14, 1873.

RELIGIOUS ENTHUSIASM.

VERILY the devout are mad. For if insanity means wild eccentricities and a departure from the ways of the world, it is nowhere so fully displayed and illustrated as in the life of the devoted children of God. They talk and act, think and feel, in a way

which the world must pronounce insane. Sanity is the world's monopoly ; wisdom, prudence, philosophy, right understanding all belong to its followers and votaries. How sensible their thoughts, words and actions ! How wise all their speculations and practices ! They seldom err in their private or public life ! But how different is the character of those who devote their lives entirely to God and religion ! How they " flounder on from blunder to blunder," and indulge in the most arrant nonsense ! They are indiscreet, foolish and thoughtless. They prefer the shadows to the substance, the dim uncertain future to the reality of the present hour. They are regardless of consequences, and would do anything that might appear right to them, however, injurious to themselves and others. Wedded to their own crotchets and whims, they never take counsel of the wise men of the world. Rather would they foolishly and rashly sacrifice their own lives than recant one iota of their convictions. The martyr blood many of them have shed to magnify their faith is the most striking monument of their folly. Such is the estimation in which religious men are held in the world. They are laughed at, ridiculed and abused as mad men, and their company is shunned. The finger of derision is pointed at them in the streets of the world. Let it not be supposed that the above picture is over-drawn, that we have exaggerated the ridicule and persecution to which religious men are subjected at the hands of the world. We do not mean to urge that the mere profession of religion or the observance of its initiatory rules in the earlier stages of spiritual life is branded as lunacy and folly. The world's persecution begins when man, not content with the lower theology and ethics which it offers, enters into the higher regions of faith. If you follow only that much of religion which chimes in with worldly rules

of "propriety," you will not be troubled or ridiculed. You may even be applauded for your success in serving two masters, God and Mammon. You will be patted on the back and encouraged in a patronizing manner for having gained the treasures both of heaven and earth. If you go to church regularly, and yet in your daily life show that your heart is in this world and not in the next, and that in business you are always sensible enough not to be too honest or truthful you may be sure of high praise for your wisdom. But if you carry your religion beyond the limits of earthly prudence, if you love God more than Mammon, if instead of skimming along the surface you enter into the depths of devotion, if instead of making your faith subservient to the world you make it subversive of your temporal interests, you must be prepared for all the scorn and ridicule which are meted out to the insane. You may partially serve God while loving the world, and be reckoned wise. But if you love God, they will call you a fool. For love means entire self-consecration, a passionate attachment for the Merciful Father, a burning zeal for His glorification, a self-forgetful rejoicing in His holy name and in the sweetness of His presence. Where there is such a strong religious passion, where the enthusiasm of holy love has been kindled, there must result a singularity of character and a degree of eccentricity and wildness to which the world must apply the epithet mad. Is he not mad who sometimes indulges in six hours' continued communion with God, preferring the bread of life to earthly meals, and the company of the Most High to that of the dearest friends on earth? Is he not mad who actually enjoys the name of the Father and Friend of sinners, and is so captivated with its sweetness as to chant it with passionate devotion every now and then in solitude? Is he not mad who lovingly forgives his enemy, and

though insulted and beaten by him, befriends him and humbly prays for his welfare? Is he not mad who enriches others by impoverishing himself, and sells all that he has for the benefit of the world? Is he not mad who deliberately gives his blood to wash away the errors and sins and sorrows of his brethren? Was not Jesus Christ mad? Were not his disciples mad? Were not the three prophets of the sixteenth century, Luther, Chaitanya and Nanak, mad? Were not all prophets and martyrs mad? Are not the best of all countries and ages mad? Yes, such men are mad in the estimation of the world. Their wild enthusiasm outruns its comprehension and sympathy, and is therefore ridiculed and persecuted. Yet who would give up such enthusiasm for the sake of avoiding ignominy? Let us all be fired with the spirit of enthusiastic love and devotion, and consecrate ourselves completely to the service of our Father, though we may be likened to fools and mad men, and exposed to all manner of derision and contempt.

November 2, 1873.

CONTEMPLATION OF THE INVISIBLE SPIRIT.

WE have often heard it said that it is impossible to conceive or love pure spirit, and that therefore an incarnate deity is a necessity. This we entirely deny. We do not think an *avatar* is necessary or desirable. The doctrine of a man-god, far from satisfying, contradicts human nature. We must emphatically say that we do not stand in need of a

visible divinity, and would not have it. Those who have studied human nature and the laws which guide it must admit that such feelings as reverence, love and gratitude are invariably directed to qualities of the spirit, and not to material and visible forms. In our daily dealings with each other do we not realize this truth? We revere those who are virtuous and pure-minded; we love those who love us and possess attractive and endearing qualities; we feel grateful to those who are kind to us. Now purity of character, love and kindness are all spiritual, being qualities of the mind, and cannot be identified with any thing material. It is these which naturally attract and call forth sentiments of regard and gratitude, wholly irrespective of their external surroundings. It is true that in honouring and loving others we honour and love the outward form as well as the inner spirit. Our parents and children, our brothers and sisters, the wife and the friend, attract our affections by their very personal features, and there is sweetness and charm in their very appearance. We wish to see them and enjoy their company as often as possible. Their presence is a source of joy and life to us; their absence is most painful. We contract such deep personal attachment for them that even their faces become dear to us. We love to imprint their forms on the tablet of the heart, and whenever we think of them, we conceive those pleasant forms. It is clear then that we love both body and mind in those who are dear to us. But philosophical analysis would convince us that the body is loved for the sake of the mind, and that the former has nothing intrinsically loveable or estimable. It is the spirit that is loved and honoured in the first instance on account of certain virtues or excellences. If the external form is loved, it is loved only because of the spirit which is associated with it. Even the ugliest and

most repulsive face becomes charming if it covers a gentle and amiable mind. It is not then the body of a friend or benefactor but the mind that dwells in the body that we truly love and honour. This truth may be made clearer if we refer to those whom we have never seen and yet revere and love. Do we not feel loyal to Her Majesty Queen Victoria? Do we not feel grateful to Newton for the services to the cause of science? Is not the memory of Howard, the philanthropist, dear to us? Does not the mind spontaneously render the tribute of honour and respect to Socrates and all ancient sages, though of their personal appearance it has no means of forming any idea? Do we not feel the profoundest reverence for martyrs and prophets? In all these cases it is clearly the mental character, not the physical form that we esteem and love. If this be true of men whom we can see, how true must it be of Him whom the eye cannot see? If those who have forms are loved for the sake of the spirit and not the form, surely the spirit of the Formless God must be loved for its own sake. Constituted as we are, we can never love or esteem any thing material or visible. Our best feelings and sentiments run towards the spirit both in man and in God. If it be necessary to call forth and gratify our love or gratitude, we must have before the mind's eye a truly affectionate or charitable heart, and not a beautiful human form. So in offering our love and gratitude to the Supreme Spirit, we need not clothe that Spirit in a charming human and visible form, as the idolators do, but simply think of those infinite attributes of mercy and loving-kindness which belong to Him, and which are manifested both in nature and in His daily dealings with us. In order that we may love and adore Him, it is enough to know that He is merciful and holy. Love kindles love. If he loves

us, we must love Him. The logic is irresistible. No human shape is needed to make us love Him, for even in men we love not the form but the spirit. We love the loving God. We adore the holy God. We thank the merciful Father. The object of our love, adoration and gratitude is altogether spiritual. To substitute a visible human form would kill those sentiments of love and reverence, far from helping their growth. Our hearts are naturally drawn towards Infinite Love, and whenever we contemplate or worship our Father we must realize and approach Him as the Infinite Spirit, not bound by the limitations of space and time, not exhibiting through a visible body only finite love and wisdom and power. The sight of gross matter, however elegant and beautiful, is evidently an impediment in the way of true spiritual worship. The contemplation of hands and feet and material body clogs, instead of helping, our conceptions of the attributes of Infinity, and binds the pinions of the soul that naturally strives to soar upward into infinite space and infinite love. To satisfy such a soul, it is rather our interest and duty to cast off all ideas of flesh and bones and of material appendages, and try to approach pure spirit in the depths of the heart. They that worship God must worship Him "in spirit." True adoration is the realization of the Divine spirit by the human spirit. The true believer closes his eyes, and positively refuses to see a visible deity. Even if such a deity existed, he would shun it. Were the Lord actually to assume the form of humanity and appear bodily, he would not and could not worship Him. A visible God is no God to him. His God is a Spirit, and he cannot contemplate or worship Him except as a spirit. He does not wish to conceive Him in any other way. Nay he rejoices in Infinite Spirit. A material divinity troubles and torments his heart. He lives perpetually

in the spirit-world and satisfies all his spiritual cravings and aspirations in the Infinite Spirit. If he thinks of departed saints and prophets, he realizes their disembodied spirits in his own soul. Nay even his daily communion with brothers and sisters is altogether spiritual. His God, his home, his family are all spiritual, for, as has been said, "the kingdom of heaven is not lo here ! lo there ! but within."

April 17, 1873.

HARMONY OF FAITH AND GRACE.

A CORRESPONDENT has drawn our attention to certain remarks made by us in our article on "God's Grace and Man's efforts" and asked us to throw more light *on the part which man plays in his own spiritual reformation*. The difficulty he seems to experience in common with many others, is in comprehending how, if the whole work of conversion is due to divine grace, the human soul can be taken to help it in any way. We have often heard it argued that man can do nothing towards his redemption and that he must leave everything in the hands of God. This is true only so far as it asserts the insufficiency and worthlessness of human efforts and the all-sufficiency of grace and recommends a complete surrender of self, in humility and prayer, to the action of Divine Mercy. But it is false, if it be construed into a justification of human indolence and inaction and a deliberate refusal to take any steps towards purification. It would be blasphemous to say that man is his own saviour. God alone can

save sinners But man, because he is free, *must at least allow himself to be saved and put no obstruction in the way of the action of Divine Grace.* Were man like gross matter bound by iron necessity nothing would be needful on his side and salvation would be a necessary growth under established laws. But free as he is, *he must voluntarily seek God and obey him.* It must not be supposed that he actively goes forward in the path of purity in his own strength and then where he stops, God does the rest. This is not the sort of co-operation we mean. *Man's efforts are more of a passive than an active character. All that he is required to do and can do is to submit humbly to the action of grace and to allow himself to be led by Divine power. God helps us to approach him : all we do is to accept the help.* We do not sanctify ourselves ; God sanctifies us and we only obey him. We move towards this throne in His light and in His strength. *Our only virtue is humble submission :* our sin only means resistance and disobedience. While admitting therefore that it is God's mercy alone that saves sinners and that they have no power of their own whereby to save themselves, we believe that *when the Lord sends us help and His saving spirit works in us for our redemption we should obediently and humbly follow His inspiration,* go where He leads us, do as He bids, receive what he offers, and go through all those struggles and activities and exercises of self-discipline which form His dispensation. Thus it is that Faith must *work* and cannot indolently hang on Providence. They that trust the Lord are made by him to work for the bread of life : they labour incessantly and zealously, but always in His strength and under His guidance. True Theistic faith has two sides—the one human and the other Divine. It means faith in human inefficiency and in Divine efficiency. It says on the

one hand humanity is nothing apart from Divinity and on the other hand man with God can work wonders. Mere idle and sleepy self-abnegation is not faith. In the same breath, faith disowns self and owns God. We have learnt to confess that we are vile and worthless and can do nothing towards our salvation. We have yet to learn the other side of the doctrine and say that in the Lord's strength, we can conquer all sins and temptations and perform moral miracles which the world shall admire. Man is but a worm ; but when the power of God entereth into him like a flood he fights like a giant and can kill sin and impurity with one crushing stroke. Thus in the lives of true believers faith and grace, humanity and Divinity harmoniously work.

August 24, 1873.

DIVINE PRESENCE.

How can man conceive God ? What is he to think of when he contemplates or addresses the unseen spirit ? Many a mind has been troubled with this difficulty and few, we believe, have been able to remove it satisfactorily. Idolatry completely saves men from this difficulty by giving them distinct and visible objects or persons for contemplation and worship. But those who have abjured idols and images and vowed allegiance to One whom the eye cannot see and the mind therefore cannot picture to itself—who is invisible and infinite, feel at times some difficulty in fixing their attention upon the God they worship. They know what they will not think, but they feel it is not so easy to determine what they must think. They turn their hearts away from every

thing that is finite and earthly and shut their eyes to every visible object. This negative work is easily done. But the positive side of contemplation is beset with difficulty in the lives of those who are not used to spiritual vision and can hardly think any thing to be real which is not visible or tangible. That God is not this, is not that—*neti neti*, as the Upanishads say—that He is not hard—not soft ; not long, not short ; not red, not white ; not air, not water ; not like man, not like matter we all understand without any effort. But the soul proceeds to ask—what is He ? What is He like ? Such questions admits, we believe, of one reply and only one. God is a presence and nothing more. Those who wish to have a vivid consciousness of the Infinite Spirit as a reality, must think of Him as a holy Presence filling all space—ever near, ever dear. To get beyond this would be to soar into the regions of fancy and wild sentimentalism where weak faith has often been shattered and destroyed. Men failing to realize the naked reality of Divinity try to clothe it in charming colours and give it attractive forms. Against this danger we must warn men of “ little faith.” Let them see, think and feel the real presence of the Father as He is, without painting Him in imaginary colours. Let him love and worship only that sweet and Holy Presence, and see Him always around and within him as his Father and Friend and Saviour. In that Presence he will find Salvation.

September 7, 1883.

THE GOLDEN RULE.

THE ethical principle of doing unto others as we would that they should do to us has come down to

us from ancient times, and is supported by the consentient testimony of all scriptures and prophets. It is a simple and axiomatic truth the world has always accepted and tried to follow as "The Golden Rule." The Hindu scriptures inculcate the doctrine in these words—*Atmavat sarva bhutesu*. The parallel passage in the Bible runs thus—"Love thy neighbour as thyself." We must respectfully bow before the wisdom of these ancient texts, and gratefully acknowledge the value of the ethical rule which Hindus and Christians have alike adopted for the regulation of their social dealings and conduct. But we feel bound to say that this rule does not appear to us to be the highest law of social morality, and that we believe there is a higher law still. When man casts away selfishness and loves and serves everybody else as himself, when he takes as much interest in the welfare of others as he does in his own happiness, there can be no doubt he has attained a very high stage of moral and religious culture. But he has not, we contend, attained the highest point. According to the golden rule self-love is the standard and measure of all social virtues. It tells us,—as is our love for self so must our love for others be ; all that we do for our own benefit we must do also for our neighbours. It calls upon all men and women to render generous services to each other up to the extent to which they serve themselves,—no more. But why no more ? Why should we not serve our neighbours more than ourselves ? Why should not the love that goes out exceed the love which one feels for self ? We do not see any reason why charity should not outrun and transcend self-love. Every body in this world of ours loves himself, however virtuous or vicious he may be. This self-love, far from being a heavenly impulse or an honourable virtue, is a common worldly instinct to which few are disposed to give credit. Should

worldly moralists try to regulate our conduct towards each other by the standard of self-love, and call upon us to do as we would be done by, we would not question the expediency of such teaching or undervalue in the least its wholesome practical effects on society at large. But the divine ethics of Theism scorns this low standard and demands a higher order of virtue than that which looks to self-love as its only measure and guide. It requires that more should be done for others than for self, and that in the enthusiastic love of humanity self should be altogether forgotten and ignored. The golden rule based on self-love is gold indeed, but self-sacrifice is a jewel. The former is worldly morality ; but total self-abnegation is salvation. In the higher stages of spiritual growth man learns and cultivates that passionate love for God and His children which crushes self and extinguishes every spark not only of selfishness but of self-love also. In fact his only ambition then is to deny self. If so, how can he control and regulate his dealings with others by an attachment towards that self which has been denied and sacrificed ? A self-denying martyr sacrifices self and all his temporal interests for the benefit of society. He loves God's family more than himself. His self-love may be a small lake, but his charity, which is endless and unfathomable as the vast Pacific, swallows it. He is anxious for the wealth and bodily comfort of others, but not for his own. He is busy in making every body prosperous and happy in the world while he himself pines. He guards the reputation of others while his own is slandered and traduced. He imparts life to the world by unhesitatingly sacrificing his own life. He so loves others that, like Christ Jesus, he dies for them and reforms them with his own blood. He is indeed above the low morality of self-love.

September 28, 1883.

PASSIONATE LOVE OF GOD AND HUMANITY.

AS worldliness is a passion so is godliness a passion. The worldly man loves the world with all the warmth and enthusiasm of passionate attachment. To him the pleasures and honours of the world are a fascination and a charm. He cannot resist the sweet spell. He runs mad after earthly treasures, and would submit to any amount of toil and sacrifice for them. He is desperately fond of the idols of the senses, and would do any thing for their sake. He loses all self-control, and is not the master of his own self. He is carried away in the strong and impetuous tide of carnal enjoyments. He has sold himself completely to the world, and acts and lives as a slave at its feet. So is the godly man altogether devoted to God. He is swallowed up in an all-absorbing passion of loving devotion. His religion is not a mere duty, not a task, but a perpetual joy. He does not pray because he ought to do so, but because he feels lifeless without prayer. God is to him not merely the Lord of the universe, the Infinite Creator, but the Supreme Friend, ever near and ever dear, the Light of his eye and the Joy of his heart. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks," so does he long to behold his Father and enjoy His company. His heart is so intensely attached to the All-merciful that His very name is dear to Him. He does not argue himself into obedience and virtue. He is driven into a life of righteousness by the irresistible charms which beset it. He renounces worldly pleasures and sacrifices his highest temporal interests without the least hesitation. It is to him a pleasure and an

honour to sacrifice his life for the glory of the Lord. Seized with religious frenzy, he is ever seeing, singing or serving the God of mercy who has captivated and enchanted his heart by the attractions of His love. Holy love has made him mad, and though a penniless and friendless beggar, he joyfully sings aloud his Father's name that the world may be saved by hearing it. When the heart of the believer is thus lost in the love of God, not only his devotion but his social virtues also assume the form of a fiery passion. Those who have not tasted this overwhelming passion industriously toil and struggle for the fulfilment of their duties, the subjugation of their passions and the removal of impurity and sin. They consult time and circumstances, weigh all probable consequences, reflect on "ways and means," try to reconcile jarring interests and harmonize conflicting duties, and even relax the rigor of high rules of morality to suit peculiar cases of difficulty. In fact they seek to be virtuous by constant vigilance, warfare and struggle, and the exercise of their reasoning powers. Veracity, honesty, charity, forgiveness, humility, patience, patriotism and the domestic virtues are each sedulously cultivated and the growth of each is the result of special endeavours and anxious self-culture. So lying, selfishness, anger, lust, pride and other vices have to be chased away one after another with the utmost care and by the employment of adequate measures in each case. The man who has made the love of God the ruling passion of his life, hates and eschews such mechanical and slow processes of self-culture. With him virtue means the love of man, not the performance of a detailed routine of outward duties. He does not practise this virtue or that; he does not seek the conquest of this vice or that. He cuts the root of all social sin and seeks the root of all social virtues. An enthusiastic love

of humanity takes possession of his heart, and under its overbearing influence he devotes his mental and physical energies to the service of mankind. He feels an unbounded domestic interest in the welfare of others, and passionately loves every man as his brother and every woman as his sister. The world is his home, and human society is the family of his Father's children. His enthusiastic brotherly love kills selfishness outright. All this love is absorbed by brothers and sisters, and nothing is left for self. Self-love becomes impossible where self is completely sold and surrendered to others. "Do to others as ye would be done by" appears too mean a principle for those who have been swallowed in a world-embracing philanthropy. Nor is outward action any measure of virtue with them. They are not satisfied with anything short of universal love in the recesses of the heart. The absence of this love is looked upon and shunned as a sin. Not to love others is wicked, however righteous outward actions may be ; to love others according to the measure of self-love is mechanical virtue ; to love others with a passionate and self-sacrificing attachment, with wild and rapturous affection, is the highest and holiest state of social morality. When such a state is attained benevolence, forgiveness and all generous sentiments become perfectly natural, and the godly soul feels the highest delight in sacrificing every thing, even life itself, for the welfare of others.

October 5, 1883.

POWER OF FAITH.

WORDS have power. This truth all ages have acknowledged. All scriptures and all sects bear testimony to it. But this doctrine, originally pure and Theistic, has been misinterpreted and abused. Those who believe that language has a saving power *per se*, that words of themselves can convert men's hearts, are sadly mistaken. Such belief is superstitious, and has done incalculable mischief in the religious world. We Theists too ascribe great power to words, but we never regard it as inherent in them. We believe that power originally belongs to faith though it is afterwards transferred to language. Indeed, there is no power in words as such, however sacred they may be, to move and quicken the mind. But instinct with faith they can exercise a most powerful influence on the lives of individuals and nations. That such influence has been exercised history and biography amply testify. Take away faith, and language becomes dull, powerless and lifeless. Neither the soul that hears nor the soul that utters it is influenced. But when words are pronounced with the deepest faith, they burn and shine, and electrify every soul that comes in contact with them. As an instance take the most hallowed expression in human language,—the name of God. Where there is no faith or pious reverence in the heart that word may be repeated ever so many times, and sung and chanted in ever so many ways, it will produce no better influence on us than an ordinary word. It will not succeed in subduing rebellious passions or purifying the feelings and sentiments of the heart. When, however, the devout believer takes the name of the Lord with faith and love, and

with a thorough appreciation of its solemnity and sacredness, it sanctifies him every time he utters it. Each letter of the Divine name proves a formidable power for chasing away sin and strengthening virtuous habits. If the believer is perplexed with doubts he has only to take the Lord's name, and his doubts will immediately give way to firm and invincible faith. If the horizon of his heart is overcast with the clouds of sorrow, disquietude and anxiety, that name will bring a flood of sweet light in a moment and give him abundant joy. If he is immersed in sin let him only cry 'my Saviour,' and the deepest impurity of his life will be washed away, and the holiness of heaven will descend upon him. The change is instantaneous. The uttering of the Divine name acts as a charm. The waves of mighty passions and unruly lusts subside as soon as it is heard, and wickedness itself seems to run away in a fright at the sound of that sacred word. So true and indisputable is this fact that believers contract a fond attachment for the name of God, love it intensely, rejoice in it, and reverently cherish it in the heart as an unfailing instrument of conversion. They love God's name as heartily as they love God. The essence of salvation,—of wisdom, love, purity and peace, they discover in the few letters that constitute the sacred name. The reasons are obvious. Faith converts words into a living power. We live as we believe. Our hearts are ruled and moulded by our convictions. Fancy that words have no power and that recitation and singing can do you no good, and you may rest assured these will really do you no good. Thousands there are who daily hear and chant the Lord's name, but are never converted by it, simply because they believe it cannot convert them. Say, however, that it *can* crush your sin, and it *shall* do so. There is a meaning in "can" which very few

care to realize. Verily faith can remove mountains. Believe that name of God Almighty is an almighty conqueror of sin and sorrow, and if your lips utter that sound, only once it may be, you will experience a mighty revolution in your heart. The power of faith is not, however, confined to the name of God or other sacred words, but manifests itself in a variety of ways. We are fully convinced of the truth that when the heart is prepared, salvation may be found in the commonest objects of the earth. Even in dust the believer may find the key of heaven. Nay he is sure to find it. To the unbeliever nothing discloses heaven or God; the believer sees religion in every object. The unbeliever in vain tries all reformatory agencies, and concludes that there is power in none to conquer his sins. The believer, on the contrary, lays his hand on every object with faith and hope, and finds the whole universe a revelation. If we are asked to say what things in our opinion are conducive to a sinner's redemption, we shall say in reply—*Every thing or nothing*. Every thing helps our spiritual growth if there is faith in us; in the absence of faith nothing can help us. The believer gathers wisdom from rustling leaves and flowing brooks, while to the unbeliever even books, teachers and prophets deliver no saving message. To the former darkness is light; to the latter light is darkness. All nature ministers, like a friendly hand, to the wants of the believer, and even the most untoward and discouraging circumstances, even darkness and death, reveal light and life to him. He is never in need of aids to salvation. All objects in the universe are to him "angels and ministers of grace." He says to yonder star in heaven or to that neglected and despised grain of sand in the street, "reveal to me the Great God," and that voice is instantly obeyed, for it is the voice of living faith. He says

he will conquer lying and lust by simply taking the name of the Lord on his lips ; he cries " Lord " with the trusting heart of a child, and lo ! his sins vanish. Nay he lays his hand on a quantity of dust, and says,—“ This I shall convert into the bread of life.” Behold it is converted, and the very touch of it purifies and ennobles his soul. Great, indeed, is the power of faith !

October 5, 1883.

RENEWAL OF MARRIAGE.

TELL those that are married to marry again and again. Of course we do not mean by this bigamy or polygamy. We are uncompromising haters of these evils. We look upon many marriages as an unmitigated curse. Polygamy is a gigantic moral, social and domestic evil, against which humanity rebels. What we mean to assert is that husbands and wives ought to renew their matrimonial engagements again and again. The marriage tie is at present tied only once in life ; we believe it ought to be fastened more and more tightly from time to time, so that the knot may prove a lasting and enduring union and ripen into a heavenly friendship. We confess we do not entertain a very high idea of earthly marriages. They may be good so far as they go ; they may be said to serve the objects which the world recognises as the end and aim of married life. But we judge them by a higher standard, and there is no doubt that when they are so judged, they are found wanting in many of the higher elements of the true conjugal state. The day when man and woman accept each other as husband and wife is important

only as marking the commencement of conjugal life. Wedding is marriage begun, not marriage perfected. The duties of married life extend over a whole lifetime, and are not the concern of a single day. They are undertaken in a minute, but their fulfilment must take years to complete. Husbands and wives are woefully mistaken and deluded if they think they have achieved their high mission by simply going through the prescribed rite of marriage. They ought to believe that their real conjugal union is yet to be accomplished, that their true marriage is before, not behind. Their earthly marriage has been solemnized ; their heavenly marriage is yet to take place. Their carnal attachment must be perfect in a pure spiritual friendship. They ought, therefore, to employ such means constantly and systematically as may enable them to form this perfect union. The best and most effective means in our opinion is the occasional renewal of the matrimonial contract in the presence of the Holy God, accompanied by earnest prayers for His guidance and aid. Who can deny that the temptations, difficulties and trials of this world are calculated to make the married couple forget their higher relations and duties to each other, and gradually sink to the low level of worldly relationship ? It is, therefore, necessary that they should be occasionally reminded of the nature and responsibilities of true spiritual marriage, and drawn away gradually from all the fascinations and evils of worldly marriage. It appears to us that they will best achieve this high purpose if they now and then sit before the family altar, and in the holy presence of Him who first united them, strengthen, purify and sweeten the bonds of mutual love. The process should be repeated as often as there is a practical tendency to forget and violate the duties of marriage, and husbands and wives are threatened with worldliness and sin. Whenever they

feel that they are running away from the kingdom of heavenly love, they ought to draw near to the Source of love, and under His holy inspiration purify their relations. Thus true spiritual love will grow in their midst, and by a constant renewal of their vows and prayers before God, they will realize that true spiritual unity which is at once the essence, the beauty and the joy of married life.

October 12, 1883.

THE INNER WORLD.

MEDITATION is one of the most important elements of worship, and ought to have a place in every form of Divine service. Devotion, whether private or public is incomplete without it. Humanity demands it, and cannot dispense with it without neglecting one side of its spiritual nature. Worship to be natural and profitable, must supply all the wants and meet all the cravings of the soul. It should embrace adoration, prayer, thanksgiving, meditation and hymns, for these are all needful to the soul, and meet its varied requirements. We cannot omit any of these elements of true devotion. It is to be regretted that while the others are recognised and adopted, meditation is generally neglected, and its necessity denied. We think it is of the highest importance that a few minutes should be set apart for silent meditation. During this short time absolute silence must prevail, all eyes must close, and every individual worshipper realize and adore the Unseen Spirit in the depths of the heart. In all other parts of Divine Service the congregation join together and follow the minister. During meditation every thing of a con-

gregational character is dispensed with, all outward objects disappear, the minister and the pulpit are forgotten and so are all the brethren assembled in the house of worship. All external sights vanished, and all external sounds are hushed. Every individual is left to himself and to his God. The profound stillness of solitude is felt and realized in the midst of a numerous congregation. The solitary temple of the heart takes the place of the outward tabernacle. Instead of "*our* Father," the soul contemplates and adores "*my* Father." What it does none can see, what it says none can hear except the Omniscient and Indwelling Spirit. "Alone to the Alone" is the creed of the meditating soul. It must be admitted that to many the closing of the eye is but darkness, and solitude is dreary and cheerless. He who is not spiritually-minded and has not been trained or habituated to solitary contemplation or communion with invisible realities, must feel himself lost in inner darkness if he tries to draw himself away from the objects of the senses. But let him persevere with faith and prayer, and he will see light in the midst of darkness. Nay, meditation will be to him a source of the highest and purest joy. It will open up a new world in the recesses of the heart, full of the beauty of the Lord's presence. There the human spirit and the Divine Spirit dwell together in intercommunion, and the true and lasting *yoga* which the worshipper earnestly longs for as his heaven is realised. When by means of meditation and communion the God of Love is realized within, His holy and serene light bursts upon the eye of faith, and the heart of the believer is converted into a romantic garden, where love and gratitude and trust bloom like beautiful and fragrant flowers, and devotion flows like a gentle stream. The whole spectacle is charming, and far more alluring than anything in the outward world.

October 12, 1883.

CRUCIFIXION.

WE value the crucifixion of Christ not so much as a glorious fact in his life but as a moral fact of eternal and universal significance. It has a deep typical meaning. Though personal and historical, it covers a high moral principle applicable to all nations and all ages. In "him crucified" we see the crucifixion of humanity. If the cross has any meaning it is this, that every man and every woman should nail the carnal nature on the invisible cross of self-sacrifice. None is accepted in heaven as the son of God except such as are thus nailed and crucified. Unless the old man bleeds to death, there is no admission into the kingdom of God. Those who retain their carnal life and only try to curb it by prayer and self-control, may become good and virtuous men in the world, but they are not fit for heaven. That life must be fully extinguished and the heart of flesh must altogether cease to beat before man is accepted by God. Salvation is nothing but regeneration,—a new spiritual life springing from the ashes of old carnal nature. Whether we are saved or not, is a problem which the application of mere doctrinal tests will not and cannot solve. No creed, excellent it may be,—Hindu, Christian, Mahomedan or Brahmo,—can serve as a passport into the kingdom of heaven. The chief question upon which our destiny hangs, is not what we believe, but whether we have been crucified. The one thing needful is the death of our animal nature. Men may believe in the highest and purest doctrine of redemption and put their trust in prophets, saints and scriptures, no amount of doctrinal purity will avail to give them a place among the 'saved.' Before the Lord's judgment seat we shall

not be asked whether we bear the Christian or the Hindu name, whether the prophet we recognise is he of Nazareth or he of Nuddea, whether our faith rests on the authority of the Bible or the Vedas, but whether we have entirely subdued our animal passions and propensities. Neither is circumcision anything nor uncircumcision anything; neither has baptism any merit, nor has *upanayan*, but new life is all in all. Except ye be converted, ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. True baptism is the washing away of the carnal nature with the waters of grace. The true *dwija* (twice-born) is he who is born again in spirit. Have we all been baptized? Are we all *dwijas*? Certainly not. The holiest and best men among the Hindus, Christians, Mahomedans and Brahmos, must answer in the negative. The animal nature still lurks even in the best regulated heart. What do we mean by the death of the flesh? Anger, lust, avarice, selfishness, envy, jealousy, pride, and all evil propensities must be so thoroughly subdued as to render their action absolutely impossible. There are many who always strive to keep the flesh under control, and are ever trying to conquer their carnal passions. Impure thoughts and inclinations may be effectively curbed for a time, but they recur so soon as temptations come in the way and call them forth. How often we fancy that the old man is dead when he is only sleeping and waiting for fresh opportunities to rise again. Our old vices are like periodical fits that come again and again, though checked for the time by discipline and self-government. We all feel this is painfully true. For who is there among us who is not troubled with such fits? We may have succeeded in turning away from sinful *deeds*. Our actions may be pure, our hands clean. By means of constant training and discipline, prayer and devotion, we may have attained outward purity of character.

But impurity still dwells in our hearts. Our thoughts and feelings and wishes are not altogether clean. We may be free from foul deeds, but from foul desires we are not free. Some men are under the bondage of anger ; some are frequently troubled with lustful thoughts ; some cannot chase away selfish wishes ; some are victims of avarice ; some are proud and envious. In some form or other our hearts have been captivated by the charms of sin, and we all feel we cannot easily get rid of our favorite vices. Though we rise, we fall again and again. We come away, from one class of vices, but we yield to another. We boast of our freedom from the yoke of one passion, but lo ! another passion rules our hearts with iron sway, and perhaps a baser passion it is. Let us candidly confess then that our carnal nature has not been conquered or crucified, but lingers in us still with all its hideousness and enormity,—occasionally checked but not altogether destroyed. And let such confession be accompanied by humble prayers and earnest efforts for remedying the evil. The chief object of our daily life, our struggles and endeavours should be to eradicate sin and destroy the very root of evil. We should never rest satisfied with temporary triumphs over our vicious habits. Let us not rejoice if anger or lust has been overcome for the time only. With earnest prayer and in God's name let us lay the axe at the root of our carnal nature. We must die unto the world and sin, and live in holiness and God. Impure thoughts and inclinations must become impossible. To this lofty aim let all our struggles and efforts, our aspirations and prayers, be directed. Let the sinful heart kneel before the Lord and incessantly pray for the glory and blessedness of crucifixion and new life.

October 26, 1883.

THEY WENT TO THE MOUNTAINS TO PRAY.

MAHARSHI JESU, so says the Gospel, departed into a mountain to pray." The *rishis* and *yogis* of ancient India too, we are told, used to repair to the heights of the sacred Himalayas for solitary prayer and communion. For the benefit of our souls we would do well to follow such noble examples. It is a good thing to leave behind occasionally the activities, cares and temptations of the world, and enter into undisturbed communion with the Supreme Spirit in some lonely mountain retreat. The soul requires constant training and discipline to keep it from the corrupting influences of the world. Sometimes ordinary means fail and special agencies are needed to prevent and remedy sin. A protracted residence in the midst of the vitiated atmosphere of the world and hourly struggles with its temptations are sometimes found so to enervate and paralyze the soul that a change of place seems indispensable. This principle applies equally to our physical and spiritual constitution. When men suffer from chronic maladies of a desperate character or from extreme poverty of blood, they are considered to be beyond the reach of mere medical dispensations, and are recommended to seek health in a "change of air." We all know that many an invalid whose recovery was almost hopeless has found new life by simply inhaling the fresh air of a better and more salubrious place. Many also have found an efficacious preventive of disease and death in the wholesome habit of occasionally visiting healthy stations and breathing pure air. The weak and diseased soul similarly benefits by turning

away completely from impure scenes and associations, and renewing its health and strength in an altogether new land and fresh atmosphere. Reading, good company, church-going, counsel, self-control, and other appointed remedies are all beneficial so far as they go, and ought to be employed by us for our salvation. But there are times and seasons in our lives when we all need a more radical and constitutional remedy, when the soul ought to be entirely removed from impure influences and translated to regions where its very life-blood may be revolutionized and purified. What place is there on earth better adapted for this purpose than a quiet and retired spot on some high hill or mountain? Far away from the bustle and traffic of the world, and above all its cares and temptations, there the soul naturally realizes a corresponding elevation and retirement within, and breathes a new and almost heavenly atmosphere. The scenery on all sides is sublime. Hills upon hills, mountains upon mountains, above the highest a higher still, all aspiring to kiss the heavens above; what can be grander? Trees, tall and majestic, of varied species, cover the heights and depths, and here and there flowers of rare beauty peep out to enhance the beauty of the wildly romantic scene. All is still as death except where the jocund birds chirp and sing, or the solemn rush of a distant waterfall is heard. No human eye is near to see, no human ear to hear what transpires. There is no fear of the presence of any disturbing element. The soul is alone, and realizes absolute solitude. Divinity reigns in the midst of this profound and solemn stillness, and is manifest in all objects. Whether the eyes are open or closed, the soul naturally glides into quiet communion with the omnipresent and presiding Deity of the mountains. No effort is needed to offer a prayer or indulge in meditation; the highest

and most solemn devotion becomes natural and easy. The soul may be said to dwell in the land of meditation and prayer, and all nature helps it to become a *rishi*. Such a place is indeed "heaven upon earth." And we can well understand the reasons why our venerable ancestors pointed to the snow-clad summit of the Himalayas as their *swarga*. It is perhaps superfluous to remark after what we have said above that we deem it highly desirable for all spiritually-minded Theists, whenever possible and convenient, to go and spend a few days or weeks in prayers and devotion in some lonely place on the hills. A band of Brahmo pilgrims have lately gone up the Himalayas for this purpose. Their object is simply to invigorate and purify their souls by means of solitary devotion, and enter into sweet and lasting communion with the Loving Father. No worldly motive has led them thither. They have not proceeded in search of gold or silver, but they have left home, family, and friends to seek the treasures of faith, love and purity. They have gone to see the Lord's glory and beauty in His heavenly mansions on mountain tops. They have gone to worship Him in solitude whom they have long adored in the midst of family and friends. They are lodged in a quiet and romantic place from where they command a splendid view of a long range of heights covered with eternal snow. In the morning they all go away in different directions for prayer and meditation. Each sits alone in a separate place, under some shady tree, and seeks the Lord in the inner chambers of the heart. It is interesting to see them thus engaged in profound meditation and devotion. Now and then they pray and sing together, and realize the blessings of spiritual fellowship. On one occasion they went down to a retired spot in the glen below, and sitting beside a waterfall chanted together the name of the Merciful God, and had a

most enthusiastic and delightful service. The worshippers rejoiced greatly, and the mountains rang with the solemn sound of *Brahma kripa hi kevalam*—Divine mercy alone. We hope similar bands of Brahmo devotees will now and then go on pilgrimage to the Himalayas, the Nilgiris, the Vindygiris and other high mountains in India for the elevation and sanctification of their souls.

November 16, 1883.

PAST SINS.

WHILE other systems of theology attempt to solve the problem how "past sin" may be atoned for, pure Theism looks only to the eradication of present sin and the prevention of future sin. The cause of this difference may be found in the more accurate notions of sin and moral retribution and the more philosophical analysis of human nature which underlie the scheme of Theistic redemption. We have learnt to believe that to fight with "past sin" is to fight with a shadow, for such a thing does not really exist, and is altogether an imaginary evil. All creeds and all men err that spend powder and shot upon this phantom-like foe. The whole battle is a comedy of errors. *Past sin* means literally a sin that is past and not present. If it is altogether an event of the past then it is dead and gone, and does not exist now. Why shall we stultify ourselves by attempting to kill that which is dead already, to atone for an evil which is nowhere to be found? Let us suppose a man has committed a murder through excessive anger or envy. His real guilt is not the act of murder, which is a past occurrence, but the anger or envy

which led to it, and may be still present in the mind as a vicious propensity, though it may no longer manifest itself in action. Words and actions are not in themselves right or wrong. It is the will that is righteous or wicked. If a man's heart is corrupt and cherishes impure desires he is guilty before the Holy God, though there may be no uncleanness in outward life. He may have ceased to commit murder, robbery, theft, adultery and other outward crimes for some time. In the eye of God his sins are not past but present. His all-searching eye sees that the evil propensities and inclinations from which those crimes originated are still present in the sinner's heart, and only need favorable opportunities to call them forth. They are asleep and inactive, not dead. They rise and work mischief as soon as temptations come in their way and stir them up. Our lives bear testimony to this truth. How often do we find that our corrupt propensities though apparently subdued are not really gone, and that our cherished vices though not manifested in the shape of external deeds still cling to the heart? There is no glory and there can be no consolation in the fact that we have ceased to rob and steal and murder. So long as our wicked desires are not eradicated we are sinners. The question we have to solve, if we are sincerely anxious for our salvation, is not whether outward vices and crimes are past and gone, but whether the vicious propensity, the criminal will is a present fact of life. That is reckoned a "past sin" which has been plucked out, root and branch, from the depths of the heart. True salvation means the emancipation of the human soul not only from outward vices but also from carnal propensities,—the annihilation of every evil desire and the very liability to temptation and sin. The Theistic believer aims at such salvation. He struggles daily with the lusts of the flesh and with sinful

thoughts, and seeks such complete victory over them as would make impurity impossible even in thought. Through the redeeming grace of the Merciful Lord he daily achieves success, and draws nearer and nearer in spirit to the kingdom of heaven, where all is purity and joy.

November 16, 1883.

HOW GOD PUNISHES BELIEVERS.

GOD so loves us that he even chastises us with sweet love. We perceive His ordinary mercy when He feeds us and clothes us and supplies our daily wants. His special mercy is manifest in those unusual and rare dispensations through which He strikingly helps us out of spiritual emergencies and crises. But the real depth and beauty of Divine love are nowhere so perceptible as in the punitive economy of heaven. It is not when the Father feeds us but when He punishes us that his love is most vividly manifested and felt. We measure His love not merely by the value of His gifts or the usefulness of His dispensations, but also by the amount of our own unworthiness. The more unworthy we are of His fatherly kindness the more intensely do we realize it. Each offence, each act of disobedience on our part, enhances proportionately the value of His mercy. We may feel entitled to favour if we are righteous and pure. But conscious unworthiness and wickedness kill all expectations of favour, and excite in us a dread of deserved punishment. Such, however, is God's love that even when we have offended and transgressed His sacred law and evoked the severest condemnation from His high tribunal of justice He deals with us

mercifully. Even when He rebukes and punishes sinners He is full of tender love. Our sins cause no diminution in His infinite mercy. He is above vindictiveness and hatred. Not all the iniquities and transgressions of this wicked world can, for one moment, ruffle the tranquil temper of the All-merciful. An angry divinity is a myth. The true God knoweth no anger. There is love in heaven for the grossest sinner, and though he is punished he is punished mercifully by a kind Father, not vindictively by a wrathful deity. How great that love which can love a desperate and confirmed sinner and feed and clothe the worst foe ! How sweet and unfathomable that mercy which while executing the sternest demands of justice upon the sinner displays only its overflowing tenderness ! To every believing soul this truth is most encouraging and cheering. A more gratifying message never came down from heaven than the fact that God does not seek the destruction of the sinner in an angry spirit, but lovingly punishes him for the sake of his salvation. The believer rejoices in tracing the hand of the Father in all His dispensations. Even in the deepest agony of the sinful soul he perceives the working of infinite love. In our spiritual life there are seasons of joy and sorrow, hope and fear, rest and struggle, light and darkness : there are bright days and gloomy nights. The nights are the inevitable penalty due to sin. To men of little faith they are an unmingled evil and destructive scourge ; and they often prove in their lives the precursor of degradation and death. Many there are who succumb to trials and difficulties ; and lose not only purity and faith but hope also, and at last die in scepticism and sin. But the true believer sees the infliction of just punishment in all the trials of his soul, and knows that the very same hand that sends days sends nights also. If he feels that his heart is dry and dreary, his prayers

hard and hypocritical and his life dull and torpid, he vividly realizes the chastening rod of 'heaven in the midst of his degradation. His trials and sorrows are the inevitable and necessary consequences of his sins, and he recognises and accepts them as the punishment due to those sins. He does not lose heart, for he has learnt to trust the hand that punishes him. It is the hand of his Merciful Father. If he cannot see and enjoy his Father's benignant face, he believes that face has been mercifully veiled, in order to discipline his heart with sorrow, and awaken in it a deeper longing for true prayer and communion. Accordingly he bears all his present difficulties and sufferings with child-like trust, and hopefully undergoes the discipline till the dark clouds overhanging his soul disappear and it re-enters the Lord's presence with renewed life and love. Then his faith in the truth that all spiritual agony is remedial and that He whose shafts torment the soul is a kind Father, is intensified and aggravated a hundredfold, and he learns to love Him the more. There is yet a higher standpoint from which God's punitive love may be viewed. When faith in Divine mercy becomes deeper and sweeter in the course of development that mercy itself appears to the believer to be the severest punishment for his sins. If he has done any thing wrong or cherished an impure thought the very contemplation of the Father's love will prove a discipline and a chastisement, and have the effect of purifying the heart. No further punishment will be needed. As soon as he is ushered into the presence of the loving Father and sees His face, he will read a lesson of rebuke and admonition in that face sufficient to check his evil propensities and deepen his faith and piety. When the Lord says to the devout worshipper with a tender voice,—“ See how I still love thee, disobedient child, in spite of thy sins,” these words fall upon him

with a thrilling and mollifying effect, and he is subdued and saved, for he feels he cannot resist such love. One loving glance of the Divine eye is enough to punish and chasten true believers. They look above, and as soon as their impure eyes come in contact with the light of the Father's eyes, their heads bend down in shame under the weight of conscious sin, and they say,—“ Enough, Lord, that benignant look is enough for the refractory soul.” Verily the exalted soul of the believer needs but a loving glance from above to purify him. God's love is to him the highest punishment and the purest joy.

November 30, 1883.

BRIEF EJACULATIONS.

OUR daily prayers supply us with strength and provisions for our pilgrimage through the world to the kingdom of heaven. But their influence does not seem to last long in the face of the adverse circumstances which beset our lives. We grow better and purer in the course of our daily devotion ; and our carnal passions and propensities are weakened, our better sentiments are strengthened, and we receive from heaven light, wisdom, love and purity. These blessings we continue to enjoy unless and until they succumb to the superior force of the temptations and trials of the world. Sometimes we retain them for an hour only, sometimes for a whole day, according as the power we acquire through prayer is small or great. The influence of the best prayer is the longest, that of the worst is the shortest, in duration. Even our purest and highest prayers, however, do not produce a lasting effect. For the intoxicating plea-

sures of the senses and the dangers we meet with at every turn in the paths of the world often conquer the feeble spirit of our devotion, and deprive us of the piety and purity we may have acquired through it. If prayers make us rejoice in the morning, ere the sun sets our gladness may often be converted into sorrow and lamentation in consequence of some painful occurrence. If by earnest supplication for Divine aid we succeed in curbing anger and lust, do not these passions in consequence of pre-established habit recur subsequently and defile the heart? All this proves that our regular morning and evening prayers are not sufficiently earnest, and yield fruits only so far as they are earnest and genuine. Devotion is a mockery if it cannot influence life. Our prayers must be such as may impart lasting solidity and purity to man's entire character instead of producing only temporary piety and fitful outbursts of rapturous devotion. The object of calling upon the Lord in the morning is that we may remember Him throughout the day. Of what avail is our morning devotion if we remain oblivious of God or prove disobedient to Him during the day? The success of our prayers depends not only upon the sincerity and earnestness with which they are offered, but the amount of godliness which characterizes the intervals. It is therefore, we believe of the utmost importance that besides offering regular daily prayers we should now and then, in the course of the day, reverently pronounce the holy name of God, or offer short prayers, or otherwise remember Him amid the ten thousand distracting cares and occupations of the world and its numerous temptations and pleasures. Such phrases and expressions as 'May God help me!' 'Divine mercy my only treasure.' 'My God, where art Thou?' 'Bless the Saviour,' 'My God is here,' are calculated to bring the Divine presence constantly before us

and sanctify our lives. These brief ejaculations have been found to do much good, and the experiences of the devout in all ages have borne testimony to the fact. The mere repetition of the Divine name, with faith and humility, has often proved a great power for conquering worldliness and sin, and establishing habits of godliness in daily life.

December 7, 1883.

A THIN PARTITION.

It is a pleasure to study and unravel the deep mysteries of the spiritual world. And as these mysteries affect our life and our practical endeavours after salvation, it is not only interesting but important and advantageous to comprehend them fully. There are certain profound secrets in the depths of the Divine economy of redemption which the struggling soul ought to know in order that he may avoid errors and blunders, adopt the right path and successfully enter the kingdom of heaven. It often happens that we fail in spite of our strength and resources simply because these are not directed into the right channel. It is not the absence of efficacious remedies but the want of accurate diagnosis that not unfrequently defeats all attempts at recovery. We may even go on repeating our errors year after year, and, as a consequence, pass through a regular series of failures till we rightly ascertain the pathology of our maladies. Pathology, both spiritual and physical, is only the science of nature's secrets; it reveals the deep causes of abnormal irregularities and therefore clearly suggests remedial processes. Its study is essential to the successful treatment of diseases, spiritual and physical. He who

wishes to be free from sin and impurity, doubt and unbelief, must know whence these evils originate, and how they may be best coped with and crushed in the very root. Most of our spiritual difficulties and sufferings arise from a widely prevalent though unnoticed disease of the inward eye. Few know the disease or care to know it. Yet it afflicts us all, secretly and imperceptibly, with almost epidemic universality. All spiritually-minded men who, following the Socratic counsel "Know thyself," have probed the depths of their deranged constitution, and ascertained the causes of their doubt and depravity, must bear witness to the fact that there is something wrong in their spiritual vision, and that it is the root of half the sins which defile their hearts and lives. Who is there among us that does not believe in the universal presence of the Divine Spirit? And yet how few there are who vividly realize that encompassing and holy Presence? Those again who are privileged to behold the Divine Being as a near and resplendent reality fail occasionally to realize Him and feel as if they are where He is not. In the morning how they rejoiced in His company! In a few hours perhaps a change comes upon their spirits, and then for days and weeks they in vain seek the Lord. Why is it that we then felt His gladdening and sanctifying presence, almost without any effort on our part, but fail to perceive Him now in spite of our best efforts? Why is it that He was unto us light then but darkness now? There is, it seems, a thin partition between the eye and Divinity which obstructs vision. We see it not, it is so thin; yet we cannot see through it, for it is impervious as a wall and insurmountable as a huge barrier. Actually there is nothing between the inward eye and God. His presence is immediate. But when that eye gets diseased and obfuscated it cannot perceive Him, though as near as before. One may change

places and usher himself into a sacred temple, the resort of saints, or the most romantic natural scenery, he sees no God outside or inside the heart, for the unbelieving and vacant eye tells him that all is vacuum, dry and dreary. Let the eye be restored to health, let the soul through intense faith say with emphasis and earnestness—"Here He is," and all space shines in the Divine light, and He is seen everywhere. Similarly a good book which used to present deep and precious truths to the spiritual eye suddenly becomes a 'sealed book,' and far from imparting any saving message seems to be a mass of unintelligible sentences and ambiguous words. You saw yesterday light and salvation in every word in the Sermon on the Mount, but to-day you read it only to criticise and doubt its wisdom and scoff at its foolish utterances. Why this change? Has the Sermon undergone a metamorphosis in the interval? No; it is the eye that has been covered over with a thin cobweb-like film of doubt and impurity, and until that is removed the eye will find darkness even in the sun, and find jargon and vexation and death in words of love, joy and life. This eye-disease ought to engage our most serious consideration and we should adopt proper and timely measures to remedy it. Much of the evil we suffer from is not in the outward object but in the inward eye. The enemy that most disturbs and defiles us is subjective not objective.

December 7, 1883.

PRAYER FOR PHYSICAL BENEFITS.

WHY do we object to prayer for physical blessings? Because the law of prayer does not fully apply to them.

We cannot be blind to the fact that thousands and tens of thousands of devout men and women among Christians and Hindus pray for rain and harvest, for health, life and comfort. Nor are we prepared to deny that they do so sometimes from the highest and most unselfish motives, and with an amount of sincerity and earnestness truly remarkable. Such prayers are as natural and spontaneous as those for spiritual benefits, and though they relate to things of this world they do not necessarily proceed from worldly motives or carnal inclinations. All this we are ready to admit. The men who pray for physical benefits as well as the prayers that are offered may be of the highest and most unimpeachable order. Yet the law of prayer and the conditions under which it is granted do not hold in such cases. We shall prove this presently. A prayer in order to be successful must be offered with the utmost confidence and with the strongest assurance that it shall be granted in heaven. The slightest doubt is sure to interfere with its success. The prayers of unbelieving lips are not accepted by God. If you pray for rain you must be thoroughly assured that your prayers will call down rain from above. There must not be the least misgiving in the heart. The soul that prays ought to be able to say—"It *must* rain," not "it *may* rain." But no man can pray with such confidence for rain or any other physical benefit. The most devout generally supplement such prayers with a proviso that they may be fulfilled *if* conformable to the Divine will, not otherwise. In other words while praying for rain they take care to add—"May Thy will be done!" thereby implying a doubt that a shower of rain at the time may or may not be agreeable to Divine economy. When a father prays for the recovery of his dying son he holds himself ready for the worst that may happen, for he is not sure that the child will recover under

the influence of his prayer, and even goes to the extent of fearing that death may happen in spite of it, and therefore learns resignation to the Divine will as death draws near. There can be no true prayer unless it is accompanied by the most perfect conviction that what is prayed for must come to pass. Such is the case in all prayers for spiritual blessings—for faith, love, purity, zeal, hope and new life. These are sure to be answered if sincere, for it has been said—"Ask and it *shall* be given." Not a single prayer for salvation was ever rejected, none will ever be. But millions of prayers for harvest and good weather, for health and wealth, have found no response in heaven. There is another argument which is also of great importance. Whether the things of the world we seek are likely to prove a blessing or a curse none knows save Heaven. They are certainly desirable ; men wish for them. But are they desirable from a moral point of view, as conducive to the soul's welfare and consistent with its eternal interests ? Who knows that disease and death, drought and scarcity may not prove blessings in the end ? Have not the worst calamities often done our souls good ? The believer ought to say with reference to all material comforts and benefits—"Not my will, but Thine be done."

MYSTICISM.

RAIONALISM and mysticism are the Scylla and Charybdis of the soul. We must so steer the vessel of life between these two dangers that in avoiding the one we may not fall into the other. Many a soul has been wrecked for want of precaution. When one sees the danger of rationalism in his own life and realizes the mischievous effects of trusting too much

to proud reason in matters of salvation, there is a strong tendency to run away too far from it and rush into mysticism. Reason is found to be a treacherous guide. It betrays the rationalist into scepticism and killing doubts about Providence and prayer and grace. It dries up the well of pure sentiment, renders the love of God impossible, and makes religion a bundle of hard social duties. When the seeker of truth and salvation feels that he has been thus betrayed, he distrusts and rejects his guide, and tries to run to the opposite side. Having reasoned too much he now reasons too little having trusted too little he now comes to trust too much. He had little or no religious feeling; now he indulges in the excesses of sentimentalism. It was all demonstration then; it is all trust now. Salvation was sought in knowledge then, now sentiment is accepted as the sinner's only hope. The reaction is striking and perilous. But its evils develop themselves slowly and gradually, and insidiously ruin the soul. The feeling element grows with wild luxuriance at the expense of the other elements of religious life. In all speculations and practices it preponderates. Nothing is accepted as true which is devoid of the sweetness and softness of pious emotions. This abnormal development of the heart issues in sentimentalism. The solid basis of reasoning having given way imagination takes its place, and instead of hard arguments, the pleasing and fascinating vagaries of fancy influence the mind. Where facts do not help and the senses cannot teach, fancy rushes in and constructs theories without any data, and conjures up the "baseless fabric of a vision." If God cannot be seen He must be imagined into the field of vision, and pleasant dreams and reveries are preferred to dry contemplation and matter-of-fact prayer. The mystic clothes his divinity with such attributes and paints him in

such colours as may gratify his own tastes and inclinations. He does not worship God as He is but as he wishes Him to be. His next life is not what faith warrants, but what he longs for and wishes to enjoy. Even his morality is divested of all practices which are repugnant to his feelings. His spiritual life is a round of ideas, beliefs, sentiments and actions which are based more upon what he imagines to be good than what is really good. In its more developed forms mysticism sinks into quietism and dreamy sentimentalism. There are many, however, who do not go to that extent, but rest satisfied with a compound of Theism and mysticism, in which upon a slender basis of fact a huge superstructure of pleasant fiction is raised. The mildest form in which mysticism manifests itself is the slight mixture of imagination with pure faith which takes place occasionally in the lives of many devout and good men. It is difficult to overcome this evil completely, as owing to its insidious nature many unconsciously succumb to it. As the right wing of the Theistic community inclines towards rationalism in doctrines and practices, so the left wing shows a tendency towards mysticism. But true Theism hates and abjures all forms of rationalism and mysticism. The least touch of these evils must be avoided as wrong and sinful. We have no sympathy with any forms of rationalism or mysticism. We are uncompromising advocates of truth. Let them indulge in arguments and discussions, and with the utmost earnestness cultivate theological studies, sift evidence and make inquiries ; let them read books to any extent, and study philosophy, history, science, and every branch of knowledge to perfection. But they must do so as Theists, and take care that they are not carried away by rationalism. Let their knowledge only confirm their faith. So on the other hand let all believers enjoy to the fullest

extent the pleasure of devotion, prayer and communion ; let them be with God in solitude as long as they like, and draw their hearts and souls as far away from the world and as near the spirit-world as possible. But such communion must be Theistic, not pantheistic. Its basis must be laid in solid faith, and it must be altogether *real*, not in the least imaginary.

BLESSED ARE THEY THAT SERVE.

IF there are men who while professing to love God do not practically follow His behests, there are those who pretend to love man and are yet unmindful of their duties to society. In both cases there is a kind of sentimentalism which indulges in mere emotional impulses but avoids action. True love, however, means service as well as sentiment. He does not love God who transgresses His will. Nor does that man truly love his brother whose mind is a prey to envy, jealousy, pride, anger and selfishness. Unbrotherliness should be eschewed in both its forms—hard-heartedness, which is negative and springs from indifference and selfishness, and positive antagonism which seeks to injure the interests of a brother. Many of those who have escaped the former and have learnt to cultivate the feelings of love and respect for their neighbours are yet found to be sinning against each other under the impulses of base passions. It is easier to love one with the heart than to give him the loving allegiance of the entire life. It is easier to say "Brother, brother, I love thee,"

than to serve him faithfully. True brotherhood denotes mutual servitude. In God's family the brother is also a servant. Love is sweet, but service hard. For in serving others we find all our evil propensities in the way. They must be wholly overcome before we can discharge our duties faithfully to each other. We must fail to adjust our mutual relations so long as we are jealous of each other's prosperity and privileges, unforgiving towards offending neighbours, cruel, vindictive or scornful. It is these passions which prevent the construction of the house of God and the establishment of domestic unity among His children. Our fraternal love is too delicate and soft to stand in the hour of trial ; it must succumb to the force of contrary passions. We may exchange the most ardent sympathies and the kindest regards with each other when there is no temptation in the way, but our love is converted into hate and our sympathy into antipathy as soon as our neighbours excite our envy or bitterness. When we are in the Temple, worshipping our common Father, we naturally feel that we are one united family, and the mere sight of the congregation excites the deepest sentiment of brotherly love. But when we go out of the house of worship into the wide world, and meet each other for 'business, either in connection with temporal or ostensibly religious duties, we feel there are ten thousand causes of irritation which tend to pull us away from those whom we loved so intensely erewhile. Some of our brethren wound our pride by doing something which shows their superiority ; others insult us and thereby provoke our anger ; others jeopardize our worldly interests, and our selfishness seeks to resent the attack. It is in such circumstances that brotherly love is tested. If we cannot love others under adverse influence and in the face of irritation we are not worthy of the name Brother. Heavy

responsibilities attach to the position of a brother. He is bound to serve the Lord's family ; he is a servant unto the lowest and the poorest children of that family. He must serve, not according to his own will, not only where service is pleasant and agreeable, but according to the strict rules of duty, and even where subjection means the sacrifice of pride and selfishness and complete humiliation. It is not proud and patronizing love with which the kingdom of heaven is upbuilt, but meek and humble love such as the servant cherishes for his master. In our mutual relations as brethren we are apt to forget the relations of servant and master in which we all stand to each other. Even where others respect and honour us, we are but humble servants, for none is exalted but he who abaseth himself. Let us believe that we are born and destined to serve society, and that our highest glory is in meekness, simplicity and humility. Not in ruling others as masters but in serving others as their servants lies true manhood. Let us direct our ambition and aspirations to humble submission, not to proud authority. He is accepted by the Lord who sits at the feet of his brethren ; not he who arrogantly waves the sceptre of power over the heads of his inferiors. There is pleasure too, heavenly delight, in the position of the brother-servant sitting at the feet of the brother-master. To serve others may be hard in the beginning, when passions interfere ; but becomes daily more and more delightful, as duty and desire harmonize. Blessed are they that serve the Lord's family in a meek and humble spirit !

*July 27, 1873.***PERCEPTION AND REFLECTION.**

IN perception we see an object as one, although we are cognizant only of its many qualities. We apprehend the unity of the substance amidst a variety of phenomena. We do not perceive abstract qualities; but we see the concrete reality in which these qualities inhere. The same remark applies to our knowledge of God. In intuitive perception the mind apprehends the unity of God, not the multiplicity of Divine attributes in a state of abstraction. With the eye of faith we behold Him as one. He has many attributes, it is true,—power, intelligence, love and holiness; but we do not realize these abstract qualities analytically. We perceive the One Divine Being who is possessed of these attributes. In fact the direct and immediate knowledge of matter and God is and must be a knowledge of synthetic unity. Those who charge Theists with worshipping an abstract deity ought to know that their charge amounts to a philosophical absurdity. It is as ridiculous to talk of men perceiving not flowers but abstract notions of the colour and form of flowers, as to declare our intuitive cognition of God to be a congeries of abstract notions of power, wisdom and purity. We can no more see abstract mercy than we can see abstract colour. In perception we realize a merciful person, a coloured object. The case is different however in reflection. Reflective knowledge is analytical. After having seen an object we may reflect on its qualities apart from each other. We may think only of colour, compare the colours of different objects, and at last write a scientific treatise on colour. Similarly, after having beheld the One True God in our intuitive consciousness, we may subsequently reflect on

some one of His attributes only, love for instance, and write a long sermon detailing the character of Divine love, its various aspects and manifestations. All this is the result of reflections, which analyzes objects and studies each part clearly and fully, for scientific or other purposes. Science is impossible without reflection and analytical thought. If we wish to have a complete scientific knowledge of the Deity we must have recourse to reflection. Thus the necessity of both kinds of knowledge, intuitive and reflective, is apparent. In the utility and necessity of this double cognition it is easy to trace the mercy of the Creator. There are peculiar seasons in life when the one or the other is most needed, and God has so provided that we can have it when it is needed. In prayer and communion the soul requires a direct knowledge of the Real God as He is. We must stand in His holy presence, and express our wants. The begging soul does not want a fractional divinity. One or two isolated Divine attributes will not satisfy it. The real God who knows our wants, loves us, and can save us ; who in other words, possesses knowledge, mercy, power and holiness, must be seen by the suppliant before he can offer any prayer. So when we wish to realize the joys of communion we must keep our eyes steadily fixed on the beauty of the Divine face. It is on these occasions that we need intuitive and direct vision. But it sometimes so happens that men form partial conceptions of God. They bow before a terribly just King, whose hard justice almost excludes mercy. Or they may worship and love a too indulgent Father whose love ignores purity. Such partial conceptions of Divinity not only involve intellectual errors but also produce an unwholesome influence on character. Hence it is of the utmost importance that they should be rectified. How ? By attending habitually to those traits of

the Divine character which have been ignored or neglected by us or suffered to lie in the background. Those who have thought almost exclusively of infinite justice must devote their attention to infinite kindness till the two unite in our thought as they are really united in the God-head. Thus by reflection we not only bring together all the Divine attributes, but keep them on the same level, for each is infinite, and form a synthetic unity corresponding to the Real Divinity. Thus true reflection and true preception both perform important functions in theology and lead us to the same Divine unity.

—

